



# FAX COVER SHEET

## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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DATE	Tuesday, November 10, 2009
TO	Brother Jack Curran, FSC Vice President for Development Bethlehem University
FAX NUMBER	011 - (970)-2- 274-4440
FROM	Brother James Gaffney, FSC President
TOTAL PAGES	including this page 2

Please call as soon as possible if you did not receive legible copies of all pages. Thank you!

Attached is a copy of a Letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton regarding Berlanty Azzam.



November 10, 2009

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Honorable Hillary Clinton  
 Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State  
 2201 C Street NW  
 Washington, DC 20520  
 FAX # 202-647-1579

Dear Secretary of State Clinton:

I am writing to you regarding the threat of deportation for a student at Bethlehem University, an excellent institution of higher learning that was founded by the Vatican three dozen years ago and is administered by the De La Salle Christian Brothers of the United States. Located in the Holy Land, Bethlehem University has provided educational opportunity to generations of Palestinian students, both Christian and Muslim. Despite occasional closing during conflicts, Bethlehem University has flourished and served the Holy Land as a highly regarded educational resource through times of peace and hostility.

Recently, the Israeli military imposed a severe limitation on the education of students from Gaza at Bethlehem University. I am concerned because a student in her final year of work at Bethlehem University was detained at the end of October and was forcibly deported to Gaza by Israeli authorities. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported on October 29, 2009 that Berlanty Azzam, a 21 year old student who has been pursuing business administration and translation at Bethlehem University since 2005, was stopped at a roadside checkpoint in the West Bank. Ms. Azzam was expected to complete her degree studies in December, but now she has no ability to return to complete her courses and then to graduate. Ms. Azzam had moved to Bethlehem in 2005, but her address in the Population Registry is listed in the Gaza Strip, the home of her parents. Incidentally, her father is employed by the YMCA in Gaza and her mother works for the UN Relief Agency there.

The Bethlehem University website states that Ms. Azzam has not been accused of being a security threat and has committed no crime. Permitting her to return to the University to complete her degree would be in the spirit of the "Agreement on Movement and Access," negotiated between the Palestinian Authority and Israel in 2005. I am hoping that you can suggest leniency to allow this student to complete her degree studies. By the way, there was no special permit required of her back in 2005 when she began her higher education program at Bethlehem.

Lewis University has a long-standing partnership with Bethlehem University in which Lewis provides graduate scholarships for Bethlehem alumni who commit to teach for a period of two or three years at Bethlehem when they complete their studies. We have had perhaps 20 outstanding Palestinian graduates from Bethlehem University on our campus over the years. Several of them currently here have recognized the difficulties that Ms. Azzam is facing and are quite concerned that justice be sought in her regard. If there is any way that you can assist us with this diplomatic issue, it would be deeply appreciated. I have long admired your continuing interest in global higher education and your strong advocacy for gifted young women around the world. I hope that you will assist Berlanty Azzam if possible, so that she will be able to graduate and begin a career in her homeland.

Sincerely,

Brother James Gaffney, FSC  
 President

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