



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

22 July 2013

Ms Sarah Colborne  
Director  
Palestinian Solidarity Campaign  
BM Box PSA  
London WC1N 3XX

*Dear Ms Colborne,*

Thank you for the interest shown by your organisation on the issue of the Bedouin villages in the Negev. I am replying as Minister responsible for our relations with the Middle East and this letter serves as a reply for all of the correspondence that we have received on this issue.

The UK continues to follow closely Israeli Government plans with respect to unrecognised Bedouin villages in the Negev. We have continually encouraged the Israeli Government and Bedouin communities to engage in dialogue to agree a lasting, satisfactory solution to this long-standing and complex issue. We remain concerned about any potential forced relocation of Bedouin communities.

I discussed the proposed legislation with Members of the Knesset when I visited Israel in June 2013. On previous visits, I have gone to unrecognised and recognised Bedouin villages in the Negev and met with Bedouin leaders and with the then Israeli Minister responsible, Benny Begin. Our Ambassador in Tel Aviv has also discussed the proposed legislation with relevant Ministers and parliamentarians whilst our Embassy is in regular contact with Bedouin leaders and activists.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Alistair Burt*

ALISTAIR BURT