

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 12, 2017

The Honorable Rex Tillerson, Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Tillerson,

We write to express our concerns about recent statements made by the Israeli government regarding the threat of demolition and forced relocation of the Palestinian villages of Susiya and Khan al-Ahmar in the West Bank. We ask that you work with your counterparts in the Israeli government to prevent the demolition of these villages, the expulsion of Palestinian families from their homes, and the expropriation of their land.

On August 29, 2017, Israeli Minister of Defense Avigdor Lieberman stated publically that the government of Israeli is moving “to implement plans to evacuate the Palestinian villages of Susiya in the South Hebron Hills and Khan al-Ahmar near Ma’aleh Adumim within a few months.” We believe such actions are damaging to the ongoing Middle East peace process and violate international law.

Susiya is home to approximately 350 people according to their Village Council. The villagers have lived in the area on privately-owned land since 1838. They have been subject to repeated expulsions due to the proximity of an Israeli settlement established nearby in 1983. Since the establishment of the settlement, the Israel Civil Administration (ICA) has repeatedly displaced the villagers.

The Khan al-Ahmar ‘rubber tire school’ is at the center of the demolition orders issued against Khan al-Ahmar. Currently attended by 170 Palestinian children (and also used as a health center), the school is the core and only permanent structure of the surrounding Bedouin community located among a cluster of Israeli settlements circling the east side of Jerusalem. On Sept. 24, 2017, in the state response to the petitions before the Israeli High Court, the State of Israel claimed that by April 2018 they will demolish the village of Khan al-Ahmar and will move all the residents to Al Jabal West.

We urge you to take immediate action to signal U.S. concern regarding the government of Israel's pronouncements on the fate of these Palestinian villages. We ask that you work with your counterpart in the Israeli government to prevent the demolition of these Palestinian villages and press for a system that secures Palestinian rights to plan, build, and live safely on their land.

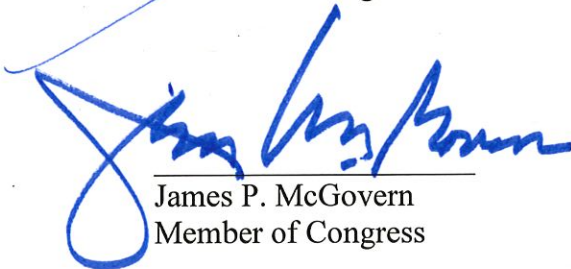
Sincerely,



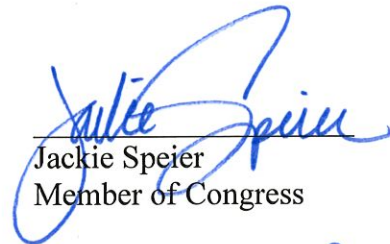
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



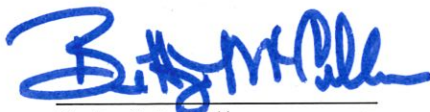
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



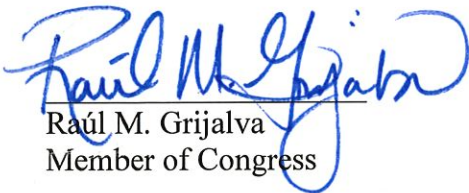
Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



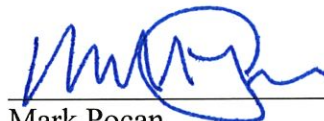
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



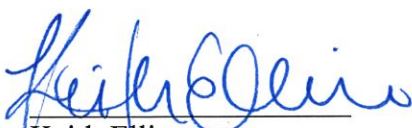
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress