



ראש הממשלה
Prime Minister

November 25, 2015

Dear Senator Feinstein,

Thank you for your further letter regarding Susiya.

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), through the Israeli Civil Administration, is engaged in dialogue with representatives from Susiya to explore alternative housing solutions nearby that will enable the residents to continue cultivating their agricultural lands. As I mentioned in my previous letter, these solutions include modern infrastructures that do not exist where they are currently squatting.

It is important to emphasize that the petitioners' requests to postpone their eviction have been reviewed and denied by the Israeli High Court of Justice. Over the years, the residents of Susiya have systematically violated Supreme Court decisions, which ruled that the construction there is illegal and must be halted immediately. Despite these rulings, the illegal construction continues.

COGAT is currently advancing dozens of master plans for legal Palestinian construction in Area C. Planning has already been completed for several Palestinian communities, including Um Rahin, Um Nizel, Ras Tira-Daba'a and Wadi Nis, and permits have been granted to begin construction. Others are in various stages of the planning process.

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-0504
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Jerusalem, Israel



The Government of Israel has the duty and responsibility to enforce the law. Although we are legally entitled to demolish illegally built structures, in most cases we prefer dialogue and cooperation with local residents in order to ensure that their needs and interests are taken into account. We do not seek confrontation with the Palestinian population, nor do we have any desire to unnecessarily evict people. At the same time, as a nation of laws, we cannot turn a blind eye to illegal construction or accept violations of judicial rulings.

In the case of Susiya, we sincerely hope that a mutually satisfactory solution will ultimately be found to bring appropriate closure to this ongoing problem.

I thank you again for taking the time to express your concerns.

Sincerely,


Benjamin Netanyahu