



12 July 2018

Federica Mogherini
High Representative and Vice-President, European Commission

Dear Ms. Mogherini,

The residents of the small West Bank village of Kahn Al-Ahmar School Community, aided by Israeli and other activists, have been protesting against the demolition of their village for months. They have also applied unsuccessfully to Israeli courts several times to stop the demolition. However, it was only the intervention of the European Union, a few important governments and the United Nations that caused the Israeli High Court to reverse its earlier decisions and halt the demolition work while it reconsiders the issue. The Court has given the Israeli government until 16 July to present its case for carrying out the demolition.

This village of 170 Bedouin is one part of the larger Khan Al-Ahmar cluster of 12 villages, which has a population of about 1,400 people. All 12 villages are threatened with demolition. Even if the Israeli occupation had not become illegal long ago because of its duration, there would be no conceivable military justification for demolishing these villages and forcibly relocating the people who live there. It would be a major denial of the villagers' human rights under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

However, beyond that, the planned demolitions are a crucial part of Israel's strategy of removing Palestinian villages from what is known as the E1 Area of the West Bank, between Jerusalem and the big settlement of Ma'aleh Adumim, and replacing them with some 3,500 Israeli housing units and associated infrastructure. That would bisect the West Bank from west to east, up to the Jordan Valley, thereby preventing the creation of a viable Palestinian state. Along with Israel's strategy of keeping the Jordan Valley, it would reserve most of the West Bank's arable land for permanent Israeli use.

The international community, including the United States, has been preventing Israel from implementing this strategy for 15 years, but the US, under Donald Trump's presidency, cannot be relied on to maintain that policy. Therefore, it is up to the European Union and important governments, acting in concert, to make it clear to the Israeli government that Israel will face adverse consequences if it implements the strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Dror Feiler, Chair of EJJJ, Judar for Israelisk-Palestinsk Fred (Stockholm).

Arthur Goodman, Diplomatic and Parliamentary Liaison officer, Jews for Justice for Palestinians (London)