



Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

6 August 2026

Dear Home Secretary,

We're writing to you following concerning reports that the Home Office is blocking the evacuation of dozens of women and children from Gaza on family reunification grounds. You will be aware that the Home Office announced last September that it was suspending family reunification applications, with more restrictive rules to be announced in the spring. Now, nearly a year later, there has been no further announcement and the process remains suspended. Palestinians in the UK have been told by the Foreign Office that they have agreed to evacuate their families from Gaza. But their lawyers report that the Home Office appear to be refusing to provide the required onward travel assurance and sometimes to be using legal challenges to block these families coming to the UK, in a way that appears to be taking a harsher line with Palestinian families than with refugees from other countries who are applying for family reunification visas.

The Government's commitment to the Gazan Medical Evacuation Scheme, to bring 300 children in need of life saving and life changing medical care to the UK, still remains unmet. The previous Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, when asked about specific cases of family reunification for Gazan children living here on the scheme, stated that she knew of 'many cases where children have come with both their parents, and cases where children have been able to bring more family members.' She also invited MPs to raise any specific cases for her to look at.

This was in response to a question about the cases of two Gazan children, Mahmoud Mansi (12) and Obaida Atwan (15) who were evacuated from Gaza to receive medical treatment in the UK. They have both visited Parliament twice to speak with MPs, and they met the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer in Downing Street back in December where he promised to do everything in his power to reunite them with their remaining family back in Gaza. Sadly, they have heard nothing further in the months since.

Given the new Prime Minister's recognition and apology that we previously 'got it wrong' on Gaza, we are writing to you to request that you:

- Urgently reinstate the family reunification process for Palestinians and work collaboratively with your counterparts in the Foreign Office to evacuate everyone who has been granted permission to come to the UK
- Assess your policy on Home Office legal challenges for Palestinians coming to the UK to ensure it is in line with refugees from other countries who are applying for family reunification visas



- Provide an update on the numbers of Gazan children who have come to the UK on the MedEvac scheme and any plans for hitting the target of 300 evacuees
- And respond to the cases of Mahmoud and Obaida, where a specific promise was made by the previous Prime Minister to progress their family reunification cases

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kim Johnson
Diane Abbott
Shockat Adam
Tahir Ali
Rosenna Allin-Khan
Jas Athwal
Paula Barker
Lee Barron
Alex Barros-Curtis
Lorraine Beavers
Órfhlaith Begley
Apsana Begum
Siân Berry
Lara Bird
Baroness Christine Blower
Richard Burgon
Dawn Butler
Ian Byrne
Dan Carden
Lord Michael Cashman
Bambos Charalambos
Jeremy Corbyn
Marsha de Cordova
Torcuil Crichton
Pat Cullen
Steve Darling
Lord Bryn Davies
Carla Denyer
Lee Dillon
Peter Dowd
Neil Duncan-Jordan
Cat Eccles

Clive Efford
John Finucane
Andrew George
Mary Glindon
Lord Peter Hain
Claire Hanna
Sadik al-Hassan
Chris Hazzard
Lord John Hendy
Chris Hinchliff
Dáire Hughes
Adnan Hussain
Imran Hussain
Baroness Jenny Jones
Afzal Khan
Ayoub Khan
Peter Lamb
Ian Lavery
Chris Law
Graham Leadbitter
Brian Leishman
Emma Lewell
Clive Lewis
Baroness Ruth Lister
Seamus Logan
Becky Long-Bailey
Rachael Maskell
Andy McDonald
John McDonnell
Abtisam Mohamed
Iqbal Mohamed
Layla Moran

Helen Morgan
Grahame Morris
Cathal Mallaghan
Paul Maskey
James Naish
Baroness Frances O'Grady
Simon Opher
Kate Osamor
Richard Quigley
Yasmin Qureshi
Andrew Ranger
Bell Ribeiro-Addy
Marie Rimmer
Lord Prem Sikka
Vikki Slade
Hannah Spencer
Zarah Sultana
Gareth Thomas
Jon Trickett
Baroness Manzila Uddin
Tony Vaughan
Valerie Vaz
Chris Webb
Matt Western
Nadia Whittome