

Prime Minister  
David Cameron

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Göttingen/Flensburg, 8th September 2011

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to express our concern regarding the 86 Irish Traveller and Roma families (400 people including 110 children) currently awaiting forcible eviction from the Dale Farm site. These people are facing an immediate threat of homelessness and further worsening of their social circumstances.

All efforts to legalise the Travellers' and Roma's present housing arrangements have failed in the face of opposition from the authority concerned, Basildon District Council (BCD). There has been no discussion of alternatives and other types of housing that respect their culture and their cultural practices. There has been no announcement of adequate compensation for any loss or damage to private property if the forcible eviction goes ahead.

If eviction does take place, as threatened, on 19 September, the residents of Dale Farm will be deprived of all essential services including education and medical care. Forcible eviction could have disastrous consequences, in particular for children, the needy, the sick and the elderly. Many of those affected are also afraid of the prospect of homelessness.

The United Kingdom has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Under Article 11 of the Covenant, all authorities in the United Kingdom undertake to respect the right of everyone to adequate housing for themselves and their family and accept responsibility for avoiding and preventing forcible eviction and homelessness. In this instance the necessary prior consultation of all those affected has not taken place. Adequate compensation for the loss of homes and land has not been provided for. The competent authority, Basildon District Council, has a duty to offer the families concerned acceptable new accommodation and financial compensation to ensure that their situation is not made worse.

Gesellschaft für  
bedrohte Völker (GfbV)  
Associazione per i popoli  
minacciati  
Société pour les peuples  
menacés  
Asociación para los  
Pueblos Amenazados  
Общество защиты  
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We urge you:

- to call a halt to the planned eviction and prevent the threatened disconnection of water and electricity supplies to the caravans, in violation of human rights and minority rights
- to observe international human rights norms concerning protection from forcible eviction and to ensure that the local authorities fulfil their responsibility under international agreements and national law to prevent discrimination
- to initiate further discussions aimed at reaching a mutually acceptable solution in which all parties have an equal right to have their voice heard.
- if the eviction of the Dale Farm residents cannot be prevented, to ensure that every family is offered appropriate equivalent accommodation that ensures their cultural identity is respected.

Yours sincerely



Tilman Zülch

President of Society for Threatened Peoples Int.

[www.gfbv.de](http://www.gfbv.de)



Jan Diedrichsen

Director of Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)

[www.fuen.org](http://www.fuen.org)

An identical appeal has also been sent to the Leader of Basildon Council, **Mr Tony Ball**,  
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