



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

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Dear Ms Francis,

Thank you for your follow-up letter to Baroness Kinnock about the situation in the Roma camps in Kosovo. I apologise for the delay in responding. I am replying as Assistant Desk Officer for Kosovo.

The World Health Organisation's office in Kosovo is supportive of efforts to close the camps and rebuild homes in the Roma Mahalla. It is training medical workers in Kosovo to be able to give chelation therapy and other treatments once the camps have been closed and the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families resettled. The equipment to carry out chelation treatment, which is the most effective form of medical care for lead contamination removal, is available within Kosovo. For chelation therapy to be at its most effective, a nutritious diet and distance from the source of the contamination are necessary. This is all available within Kosovo, which negates the need for medical evacuation to third countries.

On the specific cases you mention in your letter, Norwegian Church Aid closed its Kosovo office in September 2009. The British Embassy in Pristina has been asked to speak to other donors and the Kosovo Agency for Advocacy and Development, who have taken over Norwegian Church Aid's work, to see if there is any assistance the UK can offer.

Many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian residents of the camps have family who have already relocated to the Roma Mahalla area who they visit. Several of the families have already signed contracts to take up housing in the rebuilt Roma Mahalla. During the initial Mercy

Corps-led discussions with the Kosovan authorities, the prospect of securing resettlement land in northern Mitrovica was explored, in order to respect the community's wishes, but no land was available. USAID and ECLO affirm that no families will be forced to move, and the community's best interests for a long-term sustainable solution will be respected at all times. The next round of building in the Roma Mahalla is scheduled to begin this week, with the next scheduled for May.

Regards,

Lucy Glynn