



States Greffe: Scrutiny

Senator Ian Gorst  
Minister for External Relations and Financial Services

By email

19th August 2021

Dear Minister

**Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel**

**Discussions over Island help for Afghan refugees**

We note the recent discussions taking place with Ministers as to whether Jersey should take in Afghan refugees, following the UK's announcement that it will resettle up to 20,000 people fleeing the country, as reported in today's Jersey Evening Post. We also note the reported comments by the Deputy Chief Minister stating '*We are speaking to our UK counterparts and ultimately discussing how help might be provided.*' In a statement, the Government of Jersey added: '*Discussions are under way within the Government of Jersey to determine how the Island could respond to the situation in Afghanistan.*'

Could you please inform us as a matter of urgency what these talks involve and how far they have progressed? Could you also inform us how many refugees, if any, Jersey are considering accommodating and if these are part of the 20,000 that will be re-settled within the UK.

We recall your comments in 2015 when it was proposed that Jersey would welcome a small number of Syrian refugees; however, as this would lead to Jersey having to legally treat refugees from all other nations on the same grounds or risk breaching human-rights laws, the proposal was dismissed. Could you inform us if this is still the status in relation to the refugee crisis in Afghanistan?

I would be happy to address any questions you may have about our interest.

Yours sincerely

Deputy David Johnson  
Chair  
Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel