

# Political Affairs Brief

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

## Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Holocaust](#)

[Israel](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

## Home Affairs

### UK Parliamentary Question

#### Islam4UK

**John Mann:** To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the effects on community cohesion of the activities of Islam4UK. [309643]

**Mr. Malik:** In my role as the Minister for preventing extremism, I have met with the Home Secretary and other Home Office Ministers to discuss Islam4UK.

The Prime Minister and I have publicly commented Islam4UK's recent announcements appear intended to provoke anger and division between communities. They have not succeeded. Last week we saw local Wootton Bassett residents and the Wiltshire Islamic Cultural Centre united in opposition to Islam4UK's "irresponsible and irrational" actions.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/text/100112w0017.htm#10011285000019>

[TOP](#)

## Holocaust

### Scottish Parliament Motion

**S3M-05499 Stewart Maxwell (West of Scotland) (Scottish National Party): The Death of Miep Gies**— That the Parliament acknowledges the death of Miep Gies, aged 100, the last surviving member of the group who helped Anne Frank and her family hide from the Nazis for more than two years; admires her courage and compassion, which provided a shining example of humanitarianism in one of mankind's bleakest times; further acknowledges that the incredible tale of Anne Frank could not have been told were it not for the brave defiance of Nazi occupation laws, and applauds her continued work in causes of tolerance long after Anne Frank's death.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/business/motions/Default.aspx?motionid=18062>

[TOP](#)

## Westminster Hall Debate

### Goldstone Report

*Includes:*

*col 186WH* **Martin Linton** ... I regard [the report] as one of the most thorough and thoughtful I have ever read, and a model of even-handedness. I do not say that the original motion before the Human Rights Council was even-handed because it referred only to Israel. However, the amended mandate of the mission, as agreed between the president of the committee and Richard Goldstone, was even-handed because it refers to human rights violations by all parties before, during and after the conflict. ... Israeli paratroopers fired mortars into the busy al-Fakhura street in Jabaliyah, killing 24 people, nearly all of whom were civilians. They landed just a few metres from a United Nations school where 1,368 civilians were sheltering. In a sober, understated way, the report said that the decision to deploy mortars in a location filled with civilians was not a choice any reasonable commander would have made. The commander would have known that it would result in civilian deaths. ... A condolence tent, where relatives were mourning the victims of a flechette attack was itself hit by a flechette attack. Four mourners and an ambulance driver were killed and more than 20 were injured. The report found those attacks to be wilful killing, designed to kill and maim victims and, as such, were violations of international law. ... I will not go on about the beatings, the degrading treatment of detainees or the use of civilians as human shields. ... Goldstone's conclusion was that rather than fighting the Palestinian armed groups in Gaza in a targeted way, as Israel was entitled to do, it had chosen to punish the whole population. ... I readily concede that the report does not just mention the Israelis. The inquiry also found violations of international law in the actions of Hamas and Fatah. However, as Goldstone points out, the fact that Hamas is responsible for grave breaches of international law does not make the Israeli breaches any less grave. ...

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/halltext/100112h0004.htm#10011238000002>

*col 190WH* **Martin Linton** ... Universal jurisdiction is one way in which we can show how we disapprove of what is being done. ... The Foreign Secretary seems to think that arrest warrants would set the peace process back, but what sets the peace process back is the perception that the UK is applying double standards and enforcing international law against one country, but not against another.

*col 191WH* **Andrew Dismore (Hendon) (Lab)**: I am sure that my hon. Friend is not intentionally misleading the House, but the fact is that when Goldstone considered his mandate, he decided to go back only six months from the start of Cast Lead, not back over the eight years and 9,000 rocket attacks sent into Gaza by Hamas, which led the Israelis to have the justification of defending their people. ...

*col 192WH* **Jane Kennedy** ... I support the view taken by Ministers here, that his report is unjust in implying a moral equivalence between Israel and Hamas. He failed to adequately recognise Israel's right to protect its citizens from murderous attacks and paid insufficient attention to Hamas's acts of terrorism. ... There are victims on Israel's side, too. I must at this point declare an interest, regarding a visit I made to Israel with Labour Friends of Israel in September, when the Judge's report was published. During that visit I was fortunate to meet around 20 young men and women who lived in Sterodt, in the south of Israel. They had seen their classmates killed, blown up in the streets by Hamas rockets. Many had been injured, but they were stoic in their determination not to be driven out of their homes by terrorism. They were without doubt traumatised. ... I agree with the US Assistant Secretary of State, Michael Posner, who has accused the Human Rights Council of

"paying grossly disproportionate attention to one country, Israel. In the last five

years the Council and its predecessor have commissioned more than 20 reports on Israel-far more than any other country in the world. Since its creation in 2006 it has passed 20 resolutions on Israel-more than the number of resolutions for all 191 other members combined."

... I have one final point, on universal jurisdiction. It is important that we bring to justice those guilty of crimes committed during warfare, but we should be ashamed of the fact that our judicial system can be manipulated so that a magistrate in a junior court can issue a warrant for the arrest of representatives of both Governments and the military from countries with whom we are friends and allies.-[Interruption.] I will explain. I am ashamed of the fact that Tzipi Livni, a woman of great stature and courage and a leader of her people, cannot come freely to Britain. It is nonsense that US and UK Ministers and generals might find themselves under similar restrictions in other countries. That area of law needs urgent review, and I ask the Minister what steps are being taken to correct that legal nonsense. ...

*col 195WH* **Jeremy Corbyn:** ... The whole point about a democracy is that it opens itself up to accountability and observation. Israel made very sure that journalists could not get into Gaza. ...

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/halltext/100112h0005.htm>

*col 196WH* **Jeremy Corbyn:** ... I am proud of the fact that we have universal jurisdiction in British courts ... If that means that people such as Tzipi Livni cannot come here unless they are prepared to answer legal questions, so be it. It might discourage other people from bombing civilian targets in the future.

**Robert Marshall-Andrews:** ... Goldstone is unique; there has never been such a meticulous and judicial analysis of atrocity within so short a time of those atrocities being committed either by a nation state or by others. ... Goldstone mentions the casual shooting of children and civilians while soldiers do nothing except eat on the top of a tank. Effectively, they are doing it for fun. That reawakens images of the worst regiments of history; images with which my generation were brought up. I am talking about images of the Waffen SS doing precisely the same thing. ...

*col 198WH* **Mr. Carswell:** The hon. and learned Gentleman mentions the examples of brutality cited in Goldstone, which are based on examples provided to Goldstone by non-governmental organisation evidence. The NGO evidence, as Goldstone himself stated, was based almost entirely on unverifiable publications from politicised NGOs, such as the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, whose analysis it is fair to say is not wholly objective. Does the hon. and learned Gentleman not accept that some of the evidence base in Goldstone is highly questionable and that the report is not the objective document that he pretends it to be? ...

**Robert Marshall-Andrews:** ... What I find shameful is the speed with which our Prime Minister got in touch with the Israeli Government and told them that there was something wrong with our judicial process. What I find shameful is that the Attorney-General-our Attorneys-General in this Government have a lot to answer for in how they have used their office in the build-up to the Iraq war and now this-going to a Hebrew university, talked about war "lawfare" and said: "Israel's leaders should always be able to travel freely in the United Kingdom". Why? Why should Israel's leaders "always" be able to travel, no matter what they do or the atrocities committed by their Government, army and the IDF on their behalf?

*col 199WH* **Andrew Dismore:** ... if we are going to retain our strategic partnership with Israel and continue to have a constructive role in any middle east conflict it is vital that Israeli visitors, whether in Government or not, are able to come to this country for meetings with UK politicians and the wider community. ... would like to see our courts protected from being used as campaign forums by politically motivated groups that are not really interested in justice, but are interested in scoring party political or other political points in this long-running conflict in the middle east, which is not going to be resolved in courts of law. Our courts have been left dangerously open to political manipulation and

being brought into disrepute. ... I welcome the answer given by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead in the other place to a parliamentary question earlier this month, saying that the Israeli authorities have carried out, or are currently undertaking, investigations into 140 separate incidents, including but not limited to the 34 highlighted by Goldstone inquiry. Although those investigations are being carried out by the IDF and not by an independent body, which would be preferable, the fact that Israel is conducting these inquiries should not be ignored. Too often Israel is painted as a country incapable of self-scrutiny. ... Israel has established a legal system that is respected throughout the world, with a Supreme Court that is open to all, with few restrictions on its jurisdiction. ...

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/halltext/100112h0006.htm>

**col 208WH The Minister for Europe (Chris Bryant):** ... The Government's position starts firmly from the belief that, in all our responses, we should focus on the desirability of an enduring peace in the middle east. All hon. Members will know the Government's position, but I state for the record that we believe in a two-state solution, with a viable-not violable, as I believe I heard the hon. Member for Braintree (Mr. Newmark) say-Palestinian state and Israel secure within her borders. ... Israel has a right to build homes for its people, but it does not have the right to build homes exactly where it chooses. We have made it absolutely clear that we are critical of all plans to continue with the settlement process, particularly in East Jerusalem. We believe that Israel should stop all illegal settlements. ... Several hon. Members spoke of universal jurisdiction. We wholeheartedly support that concept. That is why we have always supported the International Criminal Court. On a slightly different point, it is why we have always supported the European arrest warrant. There are crimes that need to be prosecuted, whether through the European arrest warrant or the international arrest warrant. We need people to appear before a court, and to be prosecuted. ... In the present case, it is vital that international war crimes are prosecuted. It seems odd and unusual that in England and Wales-but not in Scotland, which has a different legal system-arrest warrants can be sought and issued without the prior request of the police or the advice of a prosecutor. That is different from what pertains in many other countries. The key point is that we wholeheartedly support the concept of universal jurisdiction. The question is how it is prosecuted in individual countries. Discussions about how we can move forward are ongoing, and I hope that they will bear fruit in the near future. ... It is important that we move to a system under which politicians from Israel-and, for that matter, other countries-should be able to travel to the UK, but as I said earlier, it should not be a carte blanche arrangement for all.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/halltext/100112h0008.htm>

## Prime Minister's Questions

**Richard Burden...** Is my right hon. Friend aware that today marks the sixth anniversary of the death of Tom Hurdall, the British photographer who was shot by an Israeli sniper while trying to rescue children from danger in Gaza? Will he join me in paying tribute to the Hurdall family for their tireless efforts in cutting through so many smokescreens put forward by the Israeli military authorities, to get to the truth about Tom's death and uphold the principles of accountability? Will he agree that as an international community we have no less responsibility to uphold the principle of accountability for the 352 Palestinian children, whose names we will never know, who died last year—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I think that we have got the drift.

**The Prime Minister:** The situation in Gaza is serious. As I said last week, the only way forward and the only solution is a peace settlement between an Israel that needs security within its borders and a Palestine that needs to be a viable economic state. I have repeatedly urged the Israeli Government to improve access for humanitarian aid and workers. In addition to what I said last week, I should say

that we have already spent more than £20 million on meeting urgent aid needs in Gaza. The Secretary of State for International Development announced a total package of £53 million for Palestine on 28 December, and that was with a particular focus on Gaza. We will meet the humanitarian needs of the Gaza people where we can. Access is important, but everybody knows that it is a political settlement that we need in that area.

[http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm/cmtoday/cmdebate/02.htm#hddr\\_2](http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm/cmtoday/cmdebate/02.htm#hddr_2)

## UK Parliamentary Question

### Hamas: Internet

**Mrs. Ellman:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to prevent Hamas's al-Fatah website being accessed by children resident in the UK. [309799]

**Mr. Hanson** [*holding answer 11 January 2010*]: We are currently assessing whether there is sufficient evidence to include the al-Fatah website in the list of material provided on a voluntary basis to filtering companies for inclusion in their parental control software.

It would be for the police to decide whether a website reaches the threshold for a notice to be issued under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2006.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100112/text/100112w0009.htm#10011271000026>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Jeremy Corbyn (574) Mordechai Vanunu** –That this House condemns the latest incident in the continuing harassment of Mordechai Vanunu when he was detained in December 2009 and placed under house arrest for being with his girlfriend; notes that he completed an 18 year sentence for revealing Israel's secret development of nuclear arsenal over five years ago; that, despite the passage of 23 years since he was brutally kidnapped by Israeli agents for the publication of that information by The Sunday Times, is alarmed that Israel insists that Vanunu has sensitive information that could harm its security; and calls on the Government to recognise these facts and to insist that Israel respects Vanunu's human rights by withdrawing its repressive restrictions and that allowing him the freedom to leave Israel if he so wishes.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=40153&SESSION=903>

## Scottish Parliament Motions

**S3M-05501 Jackson Carlaw (West of Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): Holocaust Memorial Day 2010/Gaza Now Exhibition**— That the Parliament reflects with sadness on the Holocaust Memorial Trust's (HMT) statement that "the evils of prejudice, discrimination and intolerance continue to exist in Britain today. We categorise, stereotype, discriminate, exclude, bully, persecute, attack - because of race, religion, disability and sexuality. We damage, and are damaged, as a result of our refusal to accept our common humanity"; welcomes the HMT's work in organising Holocaust Memorial Day 2010 on 27 January 2010 as part of ongoing efforts to learn the lessons of the Holocaust and subsequent atrocities such as those perpetrated in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur; further notes the HMT's observation that "Genocide does not just happen. It starts when we no longer celebrate and respect the differences between us"; unreservedly condemns the message displayed in the comments book at the Gaza Now exhibition in the Scottish Parliament during the week

commencing 4 January 2010 calling on the international community to “wipe Israel off the face of the map”, and calls on as many Scots as possible to participate in Holocaust Memorial Day 2010 events (<http://www.hmd.org.uk/events>), to learn the lessons of previous genocides and to strive to live by these lessons all year round.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/business/motions/Default.aspx?motionid=18065>

**S3M-05463.1 Pauline McNeill (Glasgow Kelvin) (Scottish Labour): Scottish Development International Trade Mission to Israel**— As an amendment to motion S3M-5463 in the name of Sandra White (Scottish Development International Trade Mission to Israel), insert at end "and calls on the Scottish Government to actively discourage this and any future trips until Israel complies with international law".

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/business/motions/Default.aspx?motionid=18064>

[TOP](#)

## Relevant Legislation \*\* New or updated

### UK Parliament

#### **\*\* Children, Schools and Families Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.html>

amendment paper

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/008/amend/pbc0081201a.15-17.html>

#### **Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/constitutionalreformandgovernance.html>

#### **Crime and Security Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/crimeandsecurity.html>

#### **\*\* Equality Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/equality.html>

Revised marshalled list of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/020/amend/ml020-iiir.htm>

#### **\*\* Flood and Water Management Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/floodandwatermanagement.html>

amendment paper

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/009/amend/pbc0091201a.109-110.html>

[TOP](#)

## Consultations \*\* new or updated

**Protection of Vulnerable Groups Implementation: Consultation on Significant Draft Secondary Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Impact Assessment (Scotland only)** (closes 2 February 2009)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation/Consultation09>

**Communities and Local Government: Creating a Single Equality Scheme for 2010 – 2013** (closes 28 February 2010)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/987402.pdf>

**Proposal to amend the Licensing Act 2003 to simplify the procedures for Licensing Statements; Interim Authority Notices; and Temporary Event Notices**

(closes 9 February 2010)

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/consultations/6498.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6498.aspx)

[TOP](#)

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