

# Political Affairs Digest

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*  
**Scottish Council of Jewish Communities**  
**SCoJeC**

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## Home Affairs

### Westminster Hall Debate

#### Prevent Strategy

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-01/debates/B8BE87F9-7E2E-46C5-9E11-DDAD5897E949/PreventStrategy>

### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Prime Minister's Questions

Q5. **Theresa Villiers:** In light of the fact that most of the countries covered by the Trump ban have a total bar on the admission of Israeli citizens, should the protestors not be calling for that ban to be lifted as well? [908502]

**The Prime Minister:** I thank my right hon. Friend for pointing that out. It is absolutely right that the House should be aware of the discrimination around the world and of that ban, particularly for those who are Israeli citizens. We are consistent: we do not agree with that approach and it is not one that we will take. I wait for the day when the right hon. Member for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn) stands up and condemns it too.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-01/debates/C80CEF83-00B7-47D8-B3CA-AB924E591E4E/Engagements#contribution-206C5F91-4014-49A3-8ABE-EFE14FC319FE>

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### NHS: Religious Discrimination

**Jim Shannon** [61509] To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on instances of discrimination against NHS staff related to their religious belief.

**Philip Dunne:** The Department does not collect information on instances of discrimination against National Health Service staff resulting from their religious beliefs. We would expect all employers to ensure that staff are treated with respect.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-24/61509/>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**John Mann (906) CST antisemitic incident figures** – That this House notes the 2016 incidents report by the Community Security Trust (CST); further notes that the report details the highest annual total of antisemitic incidents that CST has ever recorded of 1,309 cases, an increase of 36 per cent from the 2015 total; is concerned that the pattern in incidents marks a departure from a correlation with trigger events and that there is a new pattern of consistently high incident totals; is further concerned that factors reported to be possibly contributing to the historic rise in incidents include reactions to the EU Referendum, high profile coverage of antisemitism allegations relating to the Labour Party and terrorist attacks on Jewish communities in Europe; resolves to continue to offer cross-party parliamentary support for the CST and its activities including security for Jewish schools and other communal institutions and its monitoring of incidents; and further resolves to work with Government and relevant organisations to ensure the recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism reports are fully implemented.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2016-17/906>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israeli Settlements

**Jim Cunningham** [61470] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the building of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land; and if he will make a statement.

**Tobias Ellwood:** On 24 and 25 January I issued statements regarding the latest settlement announcements. I raised the issue of settlements with the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister when we spoke on 10 January 2017.

The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and take us further away from a two-state solution. We regularly raise our concerns on this issue with the Government of Israel and urge it to reverse its systematic policy of settlement expansion. We believe the construction of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is illegal, which is why we supported UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016).

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-24/61470/>

*The statements referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-for-the-middle-east-statement-on-settlement-units-in-east-jerusalem--3>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-for-the-middle-east-statement-on-settlement-units-in-the-west-bank--2>

#### Israeli Settlements

**Matthew Offord** [61906] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2017 to Question 58877 and the Answer of 26 January 2017 to Question 60521, which Ministers were made aware of the text of the UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) before the vote on that resolution took place.

**Tobias Ellwood:** I refer my Hon. Friend to my answer of 26 January 2017 (60521)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-26/61906/>

The answers referred to in the above question can be read at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-06/58877/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-18/60521/>

The answer referred to in the above answer can be read at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-18/60521/>

*Tobias Ellwood: As with all policy decisions, Ministers were consulted on the UK's position. We supported UN Security Council Resolution 2334 because it is in line with UK policy.*

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Israel: Palestinians

**The Marquess of Lothian** [HL4823] To ask Her Majesty's Government why they did not sign the Paris Middle East peace conference joint declaration on 15 January; whether that decision reflects a change in UK policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and if so, why; and on what previous occasions they have not signed such a statement reaffirming commitment to the two-state solution.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The UK decided to attend the Paris Conference only as an observer and, in that capacity, we did not sign up to the Communiqué. The UK welcomes France's efforts to promote peace but we repeatedly expressed reservations about holding a conference so close to the change of US administration, and without the attendance of the two main parties. The UK's policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is unchanged. We remain committed to achieving a two-state solution as the only viable long term solution. We joined international partners in giving strong backing to the Quartet's report in July 2016 and our position was reflected in our support for Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) on 23 December.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-01-19/HL4823/>

## Foreign and Commonwealth Office

### Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood said:

The announcement of further settlement units in the West Bank is part of a growing trend which we condemn. We have consistently been clear that settlements are illegal under international law, and not conducive to peace. This spike in settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two state solution – with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign - much harder to achieve.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-for-the-middle-east-statement-on-settlement-units-in-the-west-bank--3>

## European Union

### **Statement by the HRVP Federica Mogherini on the most recent announcement of 3,000 new settlement units in the West Bank**

The announcement by the Israeli government on 1 February to build an additional 3,000 settlement units, including units deep inside the West Bank, following the announcement on 24 January of the construction of 2,500 units and the approval of building permits for 566 settlement units in East Jerusalem on 22 January, marks a very worrying trend, posing a direct challenge to the prospects of a viable two-state solution, which is increasingly difficult and risks becoming impossible.

The European Union is strongly opposed to this policy and deeply regrets that Israel is proceeding with this, despite the continuous serious international concern and objections, which have been constantly raised at all levels.

Continued settlement expansion, illegal under international law as reaffirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 2334, goes directly against long-standing EU policy and the recommendations of the Quartet Report. A negotiated two-state solution is the only way to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of both parties and to achieve enduring peace.

[https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/19698/statement-hrvp-federica-mogherini-most-recent-announcement-3000-new-settlement-units-west-bank\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/19698/statement-hrvp-federica-mogherini-most-recent-announcement-3000-new-settlement-units-west-bank_en)

## United Nations

### **Concerned about Israel's Plan to Advance 5,000 Settlement Units in West Bank, Secretary-General Says Such Actions Could Hamper Talks on Two-State Solution**

... We are concerned over recent announcements by the Israeli Government to advance over 5,000 settlement units in the occupied West Bank.

We once again warn against any unilateral actions that can be an obstacle to a negotiated two-State solution and call on both parties to return to meaningful negotiations on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, and in accordance with international law, in order to address all final-status issues. The United Nations stands ready to support this process.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18425.doc.htm>

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## **Relevant Legislation** \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/arbitrationandmediationservicesequality.html>

#### **Assisted Dying Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/assisteddying.html>

#### **Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/culturalpropertyarmedconflicts.html>

#### **Lobbying (Transparency) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/lobbyingtransparency.html>

## **Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

## **Promotion of Israeli-Palestinian Peace (United Kingdom Participation)**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/promotionofisraelipalestinianpeaceunitedkingdomparticipation.html>

## **Wales Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/wales.html>

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## **Consultations** \*\* new or updated today

### **Consolidation and revision of the school governance regulatory framework in Wales** (closing date 17 February 2017)

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/consolidation-and-revision-school-governance-regulatory-framework-wales>

### **Racism at work** (closing date 27 February 2017)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RacismAtWork>

### **Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation: increasing numbers of successful donations (Scotland)** (closing date 14 March 2017)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00511160.pdf>

### **The UK's policy towards the Middle East Peace Process** (closing date 30 March 2017)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/foreign-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2015/middle-east-peace-process-inquiry-16-17/>

### **Adoption and Children (Northern Ireland) Bill** (closing date 10 April 2017)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/adoption-and-children-northern-ireland-bill>

### **Workplace Diversity (Wales)** (closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/wtucdiversity>

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