

# Political Affairs Digest

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

## Contents

[Israel](#)

[Foreign Affairs](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

## [Israel](#)

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Occupied Territories: Overseas Aid

**Tulip Siddiq** [69512] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assistance her Department has provided to the Occupied Palestinian Territories in each year since 2010-11.

**Rory Stewart:** The amounts of DFID official bilateral assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territories since financial year 2010/11 are set out below. The final figure for 2016/17 will be published in mid-2017.

Financial Year	Total DFID bilateral assistance (£)
2010/11	73,572,000
2011/12	91,212,000
2012/13	87,735,000
2013/14	93,859,000
2014/15	83,404,000
2015/16	77,351,000

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-03-28/69512/>

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### Palestinians: Hospitals

**Baroness Sheehan** [HL6414] To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of a reported increase in permit denials for medical staff of al Makassed Hospital who live in the West Bank and Gaza, what assessment they have made of the impact of those denials on patient treatment.

**Lord Bates:** According to the World Health Organisation, permit denials for medical staff of Al Makassed hospital increased in 2016 with 21 reported permit denials compared to 10 permit denials in 2015. Permit delays and denials can lead to missed appointments and interrupted treatments. Movement of Palestinian medical staff from the West Bank and Gaza is essential for effective healthcare. HMG has consistently called on Israel to improve movement and access for Palestinians, including medical staff.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-29/HL6414/>

[TOP](#)

## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Religious Freedom

**Jim Shannon** [69539] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what guidance has been given to country desk officers on incorporating an understanding of freedom of religion or belief in their work.

**Alok Sharma:** Advancing human rights - including the right to freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) - is embedded across the work of our diplomats. In order to enhance the capabilities of staff working to promote FoRB in their country context, the FCO issued a revised toolkit in October 2016. This coincided with our London Conference on FoRB and Countering Violent Extremism, which was attended by a number of country desk officers. The FCO also routinely provides training and seminars to increase religious literacy amongst staff.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-03-28/69539/>

*The toolkit referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561516/Freedom\\_of\\_Religion\\_or\\_Belief\\_Toolkit\\_-\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561516/Freedom_of_Religion_or_Belief_Toolkit_-_2016.pdf)

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### Religious Freedom

**Lord Alton of Liverpool** [HL6376] To ask Her Majesty's Government what instructions have been given to FCO country desk officers to ensure that freedom of religion or belief is included in their work.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Advancing human rights - including the right to freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) - is embedded across the work of our diplomats. In order to enhance the capabilities of staff working to promote FoRB in their country context, the FCO issued a revised toolkit in October 2016. This coincided with our London Conference on FoRB and Countering Violent Extremism, which was attended by a number of country desk officers. The FCO also routinely provides training and seminars to increase religious literacy amongst staff.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-28/HL6376/>

*The toolkit referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561516/Freedom\\_of\\_Religion\\_or\\_Belief\\_Toolkit\\_-\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561516/Freedom_of_Religion_or_Belief_Toolkit_-_2016.pdf)

[TOP](#)

## 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>

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

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

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

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

[TOP](#)

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

**\*\* closes in 4 days**

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

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

**Caste in Great Britain and Equality Law** (closing date 18 July 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/caste-in-great-britain-and-equality-law-a-public-consultation>

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

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

[TOP](#)

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