

# 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

### House of Lords Library

**Briefing: Scottish Independence Referendum Procedure: Section 30 Orders**

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LIF-2017-0036/LIF-2017-0036.pdf>

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## Israel

### UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

#### **Press briefing note on Syria and Gaza**

... We condemn in the strongest terms the execution of three men in Gaza on Thursday, despite our appeal and those by other international and Palestinian organizations for the sentences not to go ahead. The defendants had been convicted of treason under the PLO Revolutionary Penal Code on the basis of what is termed “collaboration with the occupier”.

These executions were carried out in breach of Palestine’s obligations under international law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which places stringent conditions on the use of the death penalty.

A number of these conditions were breached in Thursday’s executions. The individuals were convicted of treason, which does not meet the threshold of “most serious crimes”. Under international human rights law, these are understood to be intentional killings. They were civilians convicted by a military court, again in contravention of international law.

We are also concerned that trials in Gaza resulting in the imposition of a death sentence do not appear to meet international fair trial standards. Allegations of torture, which the authorities have not investigated sufficiently, raise the possibility that confessions may have been coerced. Also, individuals cannot effectively exercise their right to seek a pardon or have their sentence commuted, as required by international law. Under Palestinian law, a pardon or commutation can only be granted by the President.

We urge the authorities in Gaza to halt further executions and comply with Palestine’s obligations under international law. We also call on the State of Palestine to immediately

establish an official moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition.

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21492&LangID=E>

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## Other Relevant Information

### TUC

#### **Let's talk about racism**

... This report presents findings from a self-report survey of more than 5000 working people. It gives voice to the everyday experience of racism in the British workplace, and is part of an ongoing project to challenge racism at work. ...

This report clearly shows that racial harassment still goes on in too many workplaces. The BME workers who completed our survey faced many forms of racial harassment in the workplace, including bullying, racist abuse and violence, hearing racist remarks or opinions, seeing racist material online and on posters, graffiti or leaflets. They told us that the perpetrator was most likely to be a work colleague, with a significant number saying that the perpetrator was their manager. ...

To tackle racist discrimination and harassment at work, employers should:

- Ensure they have a strong equality, diversity and dignity policy that explicitly includes zero tolerance for racism. They must make it clear that they will support all staff who raise concerns about racism and act to protect staff who are subject to racial abuse.
- Make sure there is a simple method for BME workers to report racism at work, and make sure that BME workers feel confident that complaints about racism will be taken seriously, acted on and dealt with satisfactorily. ...

To tackle racist harassment and discrimination at work, government should:

- Develop a race equality strategy, focussed on the lived experiences of BME workers ...
- Legislate to make employers responsible for protecting their workers against racism by third parties, such as clients, contractors and customers. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/equality-issues/black-workers/black-workers-conference/let%E2%80%99s-talk-about-racism-report>

**Let's talk about racism: An interim report about the experiences of Black and minority ethnic workers in the workplace**

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/LetstalkaboutRacism.pdf>

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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>

### **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>

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

**\*\* closes in 3 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>

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