

Political Affairs Digest

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

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Prorogation

The UK Parliament has been prorogued, and will not sit again until after the General Election due to take place on 8 June 2017.

Prorogation marks the end of a parliamentary session. It is the formal name given to the period between the end of a session of Parliament and the State Opening of Parliament that begins the next session.

Prorogation brings to an end nearly all parliamentary business. However, Public Bills may be carried over from one session to the next, subject to agreement.

Motions lapse when the Parliament is prorogued, questions which have not been answered fall, i.e. nothing more will happen with them. If they have not been answered then they will stay unanswered. No motions or questions can be tabled during a prorogation.

For more information see

<http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/occasions/prorogation/>

House of Commons Written Answers

Hate Crime

Steve McCabe [71746] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that the police have sufficient resources to deal with the reported rise in hate crimes since June 2016.

Brandon Lewis: The police have increased their capability to record and respond to hate crime. The police have also improved training to staff on the identification, investigation and prosecution of hate crime. The UK has some of the most robust legislation in the world for tackling hate crime and on 26 July last year the Government published the Hate Crime Action Plan "Action Against Hate". This outlines the work Government, law enforcement and other parties will undertake over the next four years to tackle hate crime in all its forms.

Decisions on the allocation of police resources are a matter for Chief Constables in association with local Police and Crime Commissioners.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-24/71746/>

Human Rights: Minority Groups

Nusrat Ghani [64190] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what programmes his Department runs other than Prevent which aim to ensure that young people from minority ethnic communities understand their rights within UK law.

Marcus Johnes: The Department for Communities and Local Government funds a number of integration programmes that bring young people from different backgrounds together to promote social mixing and learn about their rights and responsibilities as UK citizens. For example, our £9.7 million funding for Near Neighbours since 2011 has supported the Catalyst leadership scheme which helps young people in diverse communities to develop leadership skills to help them play their part in building a strong civil society. The Anne Frank Trust works with young people from all backgrounds to help students understand the damage caused by prejudice and hatred. Similarly, Streetwise works with young people to tackle anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hate crime. We have also recently funded the Joseph Interfaith Foundation to support a project which helps young refugees to understand the social culture of Britain and integrate into British society.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-17/64190/>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Bedouin

Sarah Olney [71981] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the planned demolition of the village of Khan Al-Ahmar in the East 1 planning zone.

Tobias Ellwood: The British Government is gravely concerned about continued demolition of Palestinian property by the Israeli authorities including proposals to demolish the Bedouin village of Khan al Ahmar. An official from our Embassy to Tel Aviv discussed this issue with the Israeli authorities on 4 April. The Foreign Secretary expressed our concern about the proposals to demolish Khan al-Ahmar when he met Prime Minister Netanyahu in Israel on 8 March. I also raised it with the Israeli Ambassador to London on 1 March. On 28 February our Deputy Consul-General to Jerusalem visited Khan al Ahmar along with EU Heads of Mission, and our Ambassador to Tel Aviv raised our concerns over the proposed demolition with the Israeli authorities.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-25/71981/>

Israeli Settlements: UN Resolutions

Sarah Olney [71982] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government will retain its commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) (a) during negotiations on the UK leaving the EU and (b) after the UK has left the EU.

Tobias Ellwood: It has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal and undermines the viability of two states for two peoples, but it is far from the only obstacle to peace. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 addresses settlements while also calling for an end to incitement and terrorism. Both during negotiations for exiting the EU, and following our departure, we will continue to

strongly support the implementation of Resolution 2334. The Secretary-General reports to the Council every three months on the implementation of its provisions.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-25/71982/>

Israeli Settlements: UN Resolutions

Sarah Olney [71983] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016).

Tobias Ellwood: I refer the Hon. Member to my answer of 20 January 2017 (PQ 59710).

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-25/71983/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-12/59710/>

It has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal and undermines the viability of two states for two peoples, but it is far from the only obstacle to peace. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 addresses settlements while also calling for an end to incitement and terror. The resolution was passed on 23 December and asks the Secretary-General to report to the Council every three months on the implementation of its provisions. We will monitor the situation closely.

House of Lords Written Answers

Gaza: Electricity

Baroness Tonge [HL6823] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel and the UN concerning the restoration of electricity supplies to Gaza.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK is in regular discussion with Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA), the UN and the EU about Gaza's energy crisis. We are not aware of a decrease in electricity supply from Israel. However we regularly call on both Israel and the PA to swiftly implement key infrastructure projects that will increase the electricity supply to Gaza.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6823/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge [HL6824] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding reports of the desecration of Islamic sites in the occupied Palestinian territories by Israeli settlers, during the Jewish Passover holiday.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, we have repeatedly raised our concerns about incidents of settler violence and intimidation, and have stressed the importance of thorough investigations and accountability.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6824/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge [HL6825] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding the conditions for Palestinian prisoners

in Israeli jails.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not made recent representations to the government of Israel on this issue. We note Israel's recent commitment that prisoners and detainees are treated humanely and in accordance with international law.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6825/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge [HL6826] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel following the shooting by Israeli police officers of the activist Muhammad Amira.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, the UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces polices non-violent protests and the border areas, including use of lethal and non-lethal ammunition.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6826/>

Kemal Hawwash

Baroness Tonge [HL6827] To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are giving to Professor Kemal Hawwash of Birmingham University who has been denied access to both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian territories and is unable to visit his family.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Our Embassy in Tel Aviv provided consular assistance to Mr Hawwash when he was denied entry to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian territories on 7 April. We will continue press for clarification from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the implications of the law. The UK is strongly opposed to the Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Movement against Israel. But we believe the best way to combat this movement is through discussion rather than legislation. Ultimately it is for Israel to decide its immigration policy.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6827/>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge [HL6828] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the reported piping of sewage by Israeli settlers from Carmel, onto the land of Umm Al Kheir.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, the British Government has made clear to the Government of Israel our concerns about the humanitarian and environmental impact of the damage to water sources and the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related building activity. We deplore the destruction of Palestinian property and have called on the Israeli Government to cease such activity.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-04-24/HL6828/>

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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

Independent review of hate crime legislation [in Scotland] (closing date 12 May 2017)

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/hate-crime/2f6c8d5f/>

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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