

# 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 Questions

#### Arrest Warrants

**Mike Weatherley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what timetable he has set for the implementation of his proposals to amend the law on universal jurisdiction. [27240]

**Mr Blunt:** The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, which was introduced into this House yesterday, contains a provision requiring the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions to be given before an arrest warrant can be issued in a private prosecution for an offence of universal jurisdiction alleged to have been committed outside the United Kingdom. This requirement would ensure that, whilst private individuals could still apply for an arrest warrant, a warrant could be issued only where there was a prospect of successful prosecution.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w001.htm#10120163000067>

#### Meat: Ritual Slaughter

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, what checks are made with suppliers to ensure that halal and kosher meat are not supplied as ordinary meat intended for general consumption in canteens and restaurants of the House of Commons. [27688]

**John Thurso:** Incumbent suppliers and suppliers bidding for the award of the contract for the future supply of fresh meats and poultry to the House of Commons catering service have confirmed that kosher meat does not enter the mainstream supply chain to catering establishments and, on that basis, they are confident that kosher meat has not been, nor will be, supplied to the House as ordinary meat.

As stated in the reply given on 16 November 2010, *Official Report*, column 761W, by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough (Sir Peter Stuart Bell) to the hon. Member for East Yorkshire (Mr Knight), incumbent suppliers have admitted that it is highly likely that halal-slaughtered poultry has in the past been supplied to the House of Commons instead of ordinary meat. Henceforth, all suppliers have agreed, as a condition of contract, that halal-slaughtered meats and poultry will not be supplied unless expressly ordered or agreed to by the House of Commons catering service. This requirement has been added to the contract currently being tendered.

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, whether meat used in canteens and restaurants in the House of Commons in the last 12 months had been slaughtered by kosher methods. [27689]

**John Thurso:** No kosher meat has been served in the House of Commons cafeterias and restaurants in the last 12 months.

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, representing the House of Commons Commission, whether kosher meat has been used in non-kosher dishes in the restaurants or canteens in the House of Commons in the last 12 months. [27696]

**John Thurso:** No kosher meat has been used in non-kosher dishes in the House of Commons restaurants or cafeterias in the last 12 months.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0001.htm#10120163000071>

### VAT: Churches

**Henry Smith:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will seek agreement from the Council of Ministers to zero-rate value added tax on repairs to historic church buildings. [27098]

**Mr Gauke:** EU legislation agreed by successive Governments does not provide any scope for the introduction of new zero rates or the extension of existing zero rates. There is therefore no realistic prospect of securing agreement to the introduction of a new zero rate for repairs to historic church buildings. However, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport operates a scheme which makes grants equivalent to the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings primarily used for worship. The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will continue until 2014-15 with a fixed annual budget of £12 million.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0002.htm#10120173000042>

## Government Equalities Office

**UK Government Equality Strategy: Building a Fairer Britain**

<http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/GEO%20Equality%20Strategy%20tagged%20version.pdf>

[TOP](#)

## Holocaust

### UK Parliamentary Questions

#### Kristallnacht: Education

**Mr Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) whether the study of Kristallnacht is included in the curriculum at secondary school level; and if he will make a statement; [24890]

(2) what recent representations he has received on the inclusion of Kristallnacht in the curriculum at secondary school level; and if he will make a statement. [24891]

**Mr Gibb:** The teaching of the Holocaust is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum at secondary school level, but it is up to schools to determine whether the study of Kristallnacht should be included in this. As Kristallnacht was a key moment in the events leading up to the Holocaust, it is expected that most secondary schools would teach this.

The Department has provided funds, with the Pears Foundation, for a national programme of courses to help teachers address the concerns and issues they encounter when teaching about the Holocaust. Kristallnacht features prominently in one of the training activities for this programme.

The Secretary of State has not recently received any representations on the

inclusion of Kristallnacht in the curriculum at secondary school level.

The Government are committed to reviewing the National Curriculum to restore it to its original purpose—a core national entitlement organised around subject disciplines. We plan to consult a wide range of academics, teachers and other interested parties to ensure that our core curriculum can compare with those of the highest performing countries in the world. More details about our plans to review the curriculum will be announced later in the year. As part of the consultation process there will be a number of opportunities to contribute.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0002.htm#10120173000057>

### **Schools: Holocaust Memorial Day**

**Mr Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what arrangements his Department has made to mark Holocaust Memorial Day in schools in 2011; and if he will make a statement. [24889]

**Mr Gibb:** The Department funds the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz project, which provides for two students (aged 16 to 18) from every school/sixth form college in England to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau. Many of the students who participate in the project will be marking Holocaust Memorial Day in their schools and local communities across the country.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0002.htm#10120173000060>

[TOP](#)

## **Israel**

### **UK Parliamentary Questions**

#### **Prime Minister's Questions**

**Q14. [27571] Grahame M. Morris (Easington) (Lab):** I have just got back from a visit to Israel and the west bank, and I was shocked to witness with my own eyes 13-year-old Palestinian children in leg irons and manacles in Israeli military prisons. That is one of numerous breaches of the UN charter and of article 49 of the fourth Geneva convention. Whether or not the Prime Minister is the legitimate son of Thatcher, I am sure that as a father he would join me in condemning that appalling practice, but what will the British Government do to put pressure on the Israeli Government to comply with their obligations under international law and to relieve the suffering of the Palestinian people in both the west bank and Gaza?

**The Prime Minister:** The hon. Gentleman raises an extremely important point. Every country should obey the Geneva convention and the other conventions that it has signed, and Israel should be no exception to that. Ministers in the Government I lead raise those issues with Israeli Ministers, as we should, and that is extremely important. The fact is, what we really need is a long-term settlement of the Palestinian issue, and we want a two-state solution. It is very important that we put pressure on both sides at all times to ensure that we make progress. The lack of progress only plays into the hands of the extremists, and we can see that all the moderates in the middle east who are trying to make progress are being undermined by our failure to do better.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/debtext/101201-0001.htm#10120145000009>

#### **Israel: OECD**

**Mr Slaughter:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK representation is on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

Development (a) Committee of Statistics and (b) study team quantifying the effects on Israeli macro-economic statistics of the inclusion of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank. [25635]

**Mr Jeremy Browne:** The UK Statistics Authority represents the UK on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Committee on Statistics. The authority will also represent the UK on the study team quantifying the effects on Israeli macro-economic statistics of the inclusion of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank. This work is expected to begin in early 2011.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0001.htm#10120163000083>

### Israel

**Baroness Tonge:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Israel's withdrawal from the northern part of Ghajar and the implications of this move for the future of the Golan Heights. [HL4477]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** We welcome the Israeli announcement that they intend to withdraw troops from the northern part of Ghajjar. As I said in my statement of 18 November this is a positive development, and a sign of progress in the region. We call on Israel and the UN to work together to agree practical measures to implement this proposal as soon as is possible. It is important to note that there are a number of other issues still outstanding. We call on all sides to fulfil their full responsibilities under UN Security Council Resolution 1701, and would welcome progress on the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), including on an Israel-Syria peace deal, which would address the occupation of the Golan Heights.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101201w0001.htm#10120141000325>

### Israel and Palestine

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Howell of Guildford on 11 November (WA 127), what assurances concerning Gaza and East Jerusalem the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs received from the Prime Minister of Israel during his visit on 2-4 November. [HL4360]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary made it clear during his recent visit to the region that we want to see an end to all settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This includes East Jerusalem. My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary also discussed the situation in Gaza with Prime Minister Netanyahu, underlining that we welcome the steps that Israel has taken thus far to improve access but believe that further measures are needed.

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Howell of Guildford on 2 November (WA 389), whether the Ambassador of Israel was able to assure the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs that no further attempts would be made to alter the population of occupied East Jerusalem; and, if not, what further representations they will make. [HL4361]

**Lord Howell of Guildford:** My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary made it clear during his recent visit to the region that we want to see an end to all settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This includes East Jerusalem. My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary also discussed the situation in Gaza with Prime Minister Netanyahu, underlining that we welcome the steps that Israel has taken thus far to improve access but believe that further measures are needed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101201w0001.htm#10120141000326>

### **Israel and Palestine: West Bank**

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make representations to the government of Israel asking for the simplification and coordination of the various agencies responsible for check-points on the boundary between Israel and the West Bank. [HL4387]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** We agree that Israel's system of check points and the processes for moving through them are confusing and frustrating. This applies both to check points between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories and to check points within the West Bank, which seriously impede freedom of movement for Palestinians. We are also concerned at the way check points are used to change facts on the ground. In particular we are concerned about increasing restrictions on West Bank Palestinians seeking to access East Jerusalem.

The noble Lord may be aware of reports that Israel plans to transfer overall responsibility for the operation of check points to the Crossing Points Administration (CPA). It is too early to judge what effect this will have on the daily lives of Palestinians needing to pass through check points, but early indications are not entirely positive. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and raise with Israel the importance of easing restrictions on movement and access for ordinary Palestinians.

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the value of a three-month freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank, and in particular its value if such a freeze does not apply to East Jerusalem.[HL4388]

**Lord Howell of Guildford:** Settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace. As my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary has made clear we want to see a halt to all settlement activity.

A renewal of the earlier freeze, which excluded east Jerusalem, could be a helpful step forward enabling the continuation of direct talks, which are necessary to secure peace.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101201w0001.htm#10120141000327>

### **Israel: Shebaa Farms**

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the current state of negotiations over the Shebaa farms on the Lebanon-Israel border. [HL4359]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which brought an end to hostilities in southern Lebanon in 2006, called on the UN Secretary-General to develop proposals to deal with areas of disputed territory including the Shebaa farms. The area continues to be occupied by Israel. It has been difficult to make any progress towards delineation of the border between Israel and Lebanon in the absence of agreement between Lebanon and Syria on the demarcation of their border. We urge all parties concerned to work with the UN to solve this dispute.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101201w0001.htm#10120141000328>

### **Palestinians: International Assistance**

**Mr Offord:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) how much funding his Department provided to non-governmental organisations within the Palestinian Authorities of the West Bank and Gaza in each financial year since 2003; and for what purposes such funds were allocated; [21986]

(2) how much funding his Department has provided to non-governmental organisations located in the Palestinian authorities of the West Bank and Gaza in each financial year since 2003; and for what purposes such payments were made. [25737]

**Alistair Burt:** Between 2003-04 and 2009-10 financial years, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has provided £2,420,960 to non-governmental organisations within the West Bank and Gaza. The breakdown is as follows:

	£
2003-04	(1)-
2004-05	122,000
2005-06	104,482
2006-07	542,328
2007-08	484,113
2008-09	604,824
2009-10	563,213
(1) No allocation	

The list of organisations and project funding for 2010-11 is an indicative list, as funding cannot be confirmed at this point of the financial year.

The FCO utilises a number of funding programmes with the purpose of (a) strengthening the bilateral relationship (b) helping to manage or mitigate conflicts and (c) developing the capacity of non-state actors in the West Bank and Gaza to provide oversight of the Executive and its actions including monitoring of human rights, access to justice and social welfare.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/text/101201w0001.htm#10120163000084>

[TOP](#)

## Relevant Legislation \*\* New or updated

### UK Parliament

#### **Daylight Saving Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/daylightsaving.html>

#### **Face Coverings (Regulation) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/facecoveringsregulation.html>

#### **\*\* Fixed Term Parliaments Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/fixedtermparliaments.html>

Committee Stage, House of Commons

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101201/debtext/101201-0001.htm#10120145000002>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/064/amend/pbc0640112a.1241-1242.html>

#### **Identity Documents Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/identitydocuments.html>

#### **Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/parliamentaryvotingsystemandconstituencies.html>

## **\*\* Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/policereformandsocialresponsibility.html>

Impact assessments and background information

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/legislation/police-reform-bill/>

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **Certification of Death Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/58-CertDeath/index.htm>

### **\*\* End of Life Assistance Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/38-EndLifeAssist/index.htm>

Stage 1 debate (Result of vote: For 16, Against 85, Abstentions 2)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-10/sor1201-02.htm#Col31042>

[TOP](#)

## **Consultations**

**\*\* new or updated**

### **\*\* closes today**

**Charity Commission: Proposed withdrawal of paper forms for Annual Returns, Registration applications, and forthcoming Charitable Incorporated Organisations** (closes 2 December 2010)

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/About us/About the Commission/ols consultation intro.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/About%20us/About%20the%20Commission/ols_consultation_intro.aspx)

**Equality Act 2010 - Performance of the Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales**

(closes 17 December 2010)

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/equality/equalityact2010/?lang=en>

**Equality and Human Rights Commission: Draft Code of Practice on Further and Higher Education** (closes 31 December 2010)

[http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page\\_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen](http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen)

**Charity Commission for England and Wales: Views on Future Strategy**

(closes 14 January 2011)

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr\\_strategic\\_review.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr_strategic_review.aspx)

**Improvements to Criminal Justice Statistics** (closing date 18 February 2011)

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/statistics-cp171110.htm>

**National statistics, published by the Department of Health about the experience of black and minority ethnic patients**

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_121762](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_121762)

**Prevent Review** (closing date not stated)

<http://preventreview.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

[TOP](#)