

Political Affairs Digest

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

House of Commons Written Answers

Hate Crime

Craig Whittaker [61308] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues, (b) non-governmental organisations and (c) other stakeholders on enforcement of hate crime legislation following the UK's exit of the EU.

Marcus Jones: The Department for Communities and Local Government hosts the Cross-Government Hate Crime Programme which it co-chairs, alongside the Home Office. The programme brings together representatives from relevant Government departments, criminal justice agencies, and an Independent Advisory Group comprising victims, advocates and academics. Since reported increases in hate crime in the summer of 2016, the programme has held many meetings with affected communities and European states to reassure citizens that the UK will do all in its power to protect them from hate crimes. We have increased the capacity to monitor any future raised levels of tension and will respond swiftly to any emerging challenges. The Minister for Faith and Integration meets regularly with the National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Hate Crime to monitor progress, and has also discussed these matters with Ministers in the Devolved Administrations.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-24/61308/>

Internet: Hate Crime

Nusrat Ghani [61019] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions her Department has had with the Department for Home Affairs on proposals for a ministerial seminar on hate on the internet.

Tracey Crouch: DCMS officials will attend the cross-government hate crime delivery group meeting on 30 January. The development of the Ministerial seminar on hate crime on the internet will be one of the actions this group will take forward.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-20/61019/>

Hate Crime: Internet

Nusrat Ghani [61166] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the (a) European Commission on whether social media companies should remove illegal hate speech online within 24 hours and (b) German government on its proposals to fine social media companies for failing to remove such speech within 24 hours.

Marcus Jones: Officials from the Department for Communities and Local Government sit on the Internet sub-group of the EU Commission's High-Level Hate Crime Group, which also includes civil society and industry representation. The Group oversees collaborative work including the agreed 'Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online': http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/hate_speech_code_of_conduct_en.pdf

This includes agreement by industry to remove illegal hate speech online within 24 hours.

This issue has also been discussed at the Ministerial meetings of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council. German officials and ministers have been involved in these discussions.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-23/61166/>

Hate Crime: Internet

Nusrat Ghani [61167] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions his Department has had with EU officials on the implications for online hate crime regulation of the UK leaving the EU.

Marcus Jones: The UK legislation on hate crime is not European legislation and the UK is not subject to the EU Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia. The Internet sub-group of the EU Commission's High Level Hate Crime Working Group has worked with industry to find collaborative solutions. Officials will continue to engage with the industry through this Working Group and other forums.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-23/61167/>

Football: Discrimination

Nusrat Ghani [60966] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department supports projects in football to tackle anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination; and if she will make a statement.

Tracey Crouch: There is no place for discrimination of any kind in sport, at any level. I receive regular updates on English football's Inclusion & Anti-Discrimination Action Plan, which details the work undertaken by the football authorities, clubs, County Football Associations and campaign groups to tackle all forms of discrimination and ensure the game is open and welcoming to everyone at all levels.

We are fully appreciative of the efforts football and other sports have made over a number of years to tackle discrimination. For example football and rugby union bodies, including the Premier League, the Football Association, the English Football League, the Professional Game Match Officials Limited, Premiership Rugby and the Rugby Football Union, all supported Stonewall's Rainbow Laces campaign to show support for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGB&T) players and fans, as part of which players and officials wore rainbow-coloured laces and armbands.

My Department is also supportive of the Home Office's recent work in partnership with Kick It Out to develop guidance on tackling anti-Muslim hatred and also on initiatives related to LGB&T hate crime. This was outlined in 'Action Against Hate',

the government's plan for tackling hate crime, published in July 2016. It builds on Kick It Out's previous work with the Community Security Trust and Maccabi GB on reporting anti-Semitism in football through guidance to all professional clubs and managers of stadia.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-01-20/60966/>

[TOP](#)

Holocaust

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Ambassador Quarrey's speech for International Holocaust Remembrance Day

David Quarrey, British Ambassador to Israel said: ... One of the most distressing conversations I have had in my time in Israel was in my first couple of weeks. I was visiting Cafe Britannia, a meeting place for Holocaust survivors, in Eshkol Regional Council. I spoke to several survivors that day, but one conversation really stuck with me. A lady in her 90s who had lived through the Holocaust in Romania told me how, in old age, the memories had got worse. In her youth, as she came to Israel and built a family, a home and a country, she had been able to contain those memories and look to the future. But now, with time for reflection and perhaps some loneliness, the memories of that terrible time – of family members lost and lives devastated - had come flooding back. It was a stark, terrible reminder of the continuing human cost of the worst crime in history. As time passes, there are fewer survivors. We must cherish them while we can. The responsibility becomes even greater for all of us – governments, civil society, individuals – to preserve the memory. ...

Holocaust remembrance is vital. But it is also futile if we do not tackle contemporary anti-Semitism. We make a grave mistake if we think this is only a problem of the past.

The UK is one of the safest places in the world to be Jewish. The Jewish community in the UK is stable in terms of numbers, and thriving in every other sense. It makes a precious contribution to Britain. Levels of anti-Semitism are low as measured by international surveys. But we cannot ignore the fact that the number of anti-Semitic attacks has increased in recent years.

Theresa May, both when she was Home Secretary and now as Prime Minister, has been clear in her determination to fight anti-Semitism. The Government works closely with the Community Security Trust to protect the Jewish community in the UK. And Prime Minister May announced last month that the UK would be one of the first countries formally to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism, and that the British Government would confront all those who seek to undermine the right of Jewish people to live free of fear and harassment. ...

For someone of my generation, the Holocaust was one of the central moral facts of our education. Sometimes, as I look at the appalling anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial that can be found so easily online, I wonder if that is still the case today. But then I think of the meeting I have with the Holocaust Education Trust's young ambassadors. Each year, around 20 of them come from the UK to Israel – none Jewish, but all committed to understanding and preserving the memory of the Holocaust and learning its lessons for our own societies today, as well as getting to know Israel and Judaism. The conversation is profound and inspiring. It gives me hope.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/ambassador-quarreys-speech-for-international-holocaust-remembrance-day>

European Network Against Racism

International Holocaust Remembrance Day: EU must tackle contemporary Antisemitism and Antigypsyism

The International Holocaust Day is a vital opportunity to remember the tragic events of the Holocaust and to reaffirm our commitment to ensure that such injustices are never to reoccur. We must take the opportunity to commemorate those who were subject to mass extermination during the Holocaust – including Jewish people, Roma, homosexuals and people with disabilities – and also those otherwise persecuted under the Nazi regime, such as people of African descent. Only by remembering can we hope to ensure the equality and safety for Jewish communities in Europe alongside all other ethnic and religious communities. We must never forget that around 6 million Jews and at least 500,000 Roma were exterminated during the Holocaust, based on notions of racial inferiority.

There is, however, a very real risk that these lessons are being forgotten. Last week, Bjoern Hoecke of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which promotes a xenophobic and racist agenda, [criticised](#) Berlin's Holocaust memorial and questioned the need to dwell on the Holocaust as an aspect of German history. This is just one of many instances in previous months in which the growing tide of Europe's political right wing have attempted to rally against minorities.

Since the Holocaust, harmful stereotypes and [myths](#) about Jewish people have persisted in Europe and these are increasingly materialising into deadly attacks, physical violence, hate speech (especially online), attacks against property, and the desecration of places of worship and cemeteries. Some European Jews feel forced to hide the fact that they are Jewish or have a Jewish background.

In [Germany](#), official police statistics recorded some 1,300 antisemitic crimes nationwide in 2015. The Community Security Trust [recorded](#) 557 antisemitic incidents across the United Kingdom in the first six months of 2016, an 11% increase compared to the same period in 2015. 40% of 1,200 Jews surveyed in [France](#) said they avoided wearing symbols that identified them as Jews for fear of antisemitic attacks. In Poland, a [study](#) conducted by the Center for Research on Prejudice at the University of Warsaw finds a significant increase in negative attitudes toward Jews from 2014 to 2016. ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.enar-eu.org/Joint-statement-International-Holocaust-Remembrance-Day-EU-must-tackle>

United Nations

Warning against rising intolerance, UN remembers Holocaust and condemns anti-Semitism

Decrying the anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust, the international community today remembered millions of people who suffered in the genocide and honoured the survivors who continue to educate future generations about the ills that hatred and discrimination can bring.

Calling the Holocaust “an unparalleled crime against humanity,” United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres [said](#) that “history keeps moving forward, but anti-Semitism keeps coming back.” ... He voiced his extreme concern at the discrimination faced by immigrants, refugees and minorities across the world, particularly the stereotyping of Muslims, referring to how the Holocaust was allowed to spread: “Hardships and instability created fertile groups for scapegoating.” ...

The UN chief spoke personally about the history of Jews in his home country, Portugal, noting that anti-Semitism is “more than a question of religion, [it] is essentially an expression of racism.” ...

The President of the General Assembly, Peter Thomson, began his [remarks](#) by quoting Mr. Wiesel, asking: “How does one mourn for six million people who died? How many candles does one light? How many prayers does one recite?” ...

The keynote address was given by Noah Klieger. Born in 1926, Mr. Klieger, a survivor of Auschwitz, had founded a youth movement to help Jews cross the Swiss border and went on to become one of Israel’s most notable journalists. He is today allegedly the oldest working journalist in the world. ...

He praised the value of education and the creation of the [Holocaust and the UN Outreach Programme](#) to teach people around the world about what took place, but added that “one who has not lived through the German camps does not know about the German camps.”

He called for the creation of a teaching programme in all schools around the world so that the horrors of the Holocaust are not repeated and to counter anti-Semitism. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56058#.Wl4rp7Z96nY>

We Can Never Remain Silent amid People’s Suffering, Secretary-General Says in Message for International Day to Commemorate Victims of Holocaust

Today, we honour the victims of the Holocaust, an incomparable tragedy in human history.

The world has a duty to remember that the Holocaust was a systematic attempt to eliminate the Jewish people and so many others.

It would be a dangerous error to think of the Holocaust as simply the result of the insanity of a group of criminal Nazis. On the contrary, the Holocaust was the culmination of millennia of hatred, scapegoating and discrimination targeting the Jews, what we now call anti-Semitism.

Tragically, and contrary to our resolve, anti-Semitism continues to thrive. We are also seeing a deeply troubling rise in extremism, xenophobia, racism and anti-Muslim hatred. Irrationality and intolerance are back.

This is in complete contrast to the universal values enshrined in the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We can never remain silent or indifferent when human beings are suffering.

We must always defend the vulnerable and bring tormentors to justice.

And as the theme of this year’s observance highlights, a better future depends on education.

After the horrors of the twentieth century, there should be no room for intolerance in the twenty-first. I guarantee you that as Secretary-General of the United Nations, I will be in the frontline of the battle against anti-Semitism and all other forms of hatred.

Let us build a future of dignity and equality for all — and thus honour the victims of the Holocaust who we will never allow to be forgotten.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18417.doc.htm>

[TOP](#)

[Israel](#)

Foreign Affairs Committee

UK’s policy towards the Middle East Peace Process inquiry launched

... Chair of the Committee, Crispin Blunt MP, commented: "The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains an open wound on the map of the Middle East, leaving successive generations living under the perpetual shadow of destructive violence. It is unlikely that 2017 will be the year when a just and equitable solution is reached but, a century after the Balfour

Declaration, the Foreign Affairs Committee wants to examine the UK's role and our efforts to enable a resolution.

The Committee will consider the historic and systemic issues that constitute such stubborn obstacles to peace. This context includes on-going issues of violence and incitement, internal divisions, and settlement expansion - all set within the context of Britain's relations with the various parties to the conflict and its efforts to help them overcome these obstacles.

Our inquiry will also examine the evolving diplomatic context, including the UK's position in response to the policies of the new US administration, the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 2334, and the partnership with the European Union in supporting peace as we begin the Brexit process. I would like us to scrutinise the Government's engagement with the recent efforts of both France and the Obama administration, in support of the peace process.

The Government may have formally closed the issue of Shai Masot, but one of our terms of reference invites consideration of the way that foreign states and interested parties seek to influence UK policy. In any such discussion, it is necessary to recognise the legitimate right of individuals and organisations to lobby within the bounds of the law. It is important to understand the context in which the UK formulates policy." ...

To read the full press release see

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

[TOP](#)

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

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

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

Second Reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-01-27/debates/CB7A1173-F802-42CE-89F8-16B26FF5DFE0/ArbitrationAndMediationServices\(Equality\)Bill\(HL\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-01-27/debates/CB7A1173-F802-42CE-89F8-16B26FF5DFE0/ArbitrationAndMediationServices(Equality)Bill(HL))

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>

Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 2 days**

Welsh Assembly Inquiry into Lobbying (closing date 31 January 2017)

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?id=236&RPID=1507974161&cp=yes>

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>