

# Political Affairs Digest

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

## Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Israel](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

## Home Affairs

### Home Office Inquiry into Hate Crime and its Violent Consequences

**Report: Hate crime: abuse, hate and extremism online**

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/609/609.pdf>

[TOP](#)

## Israel

### International Relations Committee Inquiry into Transformation of Power in the Middle East

**Report: The Middle East: Time for New Realism**

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldintrel/159/159.pdf>

## UNSCO

### **Middle East peace effort lacks progress on political front – UN reports**

The lack of progress in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is impeding Palestine's development, according to a new United Nations report, which also reiterates the international community's commitment to a two-state solution in the region.

The report, issued by the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, notes that “despite a number of international efforts over the past six months to advance the two-state solution, last year has been characterized by a [continued lack of progress](#) on the political front.”

In contrast to recommendations outlined in the [July 2016 report by the Middle East Quartet](#), there has been “a surge in Israeli settlement-related activity and a continued high rate of demolitions in Palestinian and Bedouin communities” as well as “continuing acts of violence against civilians, signs of a deepening political rift between Gaza and the West Bank, and continued military build-up and firing of rockets by extremist groups in Gaza.”

This environment threatens the erosion of the achievements of the Palestinian state building effort ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56658#.WQioLol96nY>

## **Report from the Office of the Un Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO)**

<http://www.unsco.org/Documents/Special/UNSCO%20Report%20to%20AHLC%20-%201%20May%202017.pdf>

## **UNESCO**

### **Motion on Occupied Palestine: 201 EX/PX/DR.30.1**

... 4. Reaffirming the importance of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls for the three monotheistic religions,

5. Reminding that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the “basic law” on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith ...

7. Regrets the failure of the Israeli occupying authorities to cease the persistent excavations, tunneling, works and projects in East Jerusalem, particularly in and around the Old City of Jerusalem, which are illegal under international law and reiterates its request to Israel, the occupying Power, to prohibit all violations which are not in conformity with the provisions of the relevant UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions ...

10. Deplores the military confrontations in and around the Gaza Strip and the civilian casualties caused, as well as the continuous negative impact in the fields of competence of UNESCO, the attacks on schools and other educational and cultural facilities, including breaches of the inviolability of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools;

11. Also deplores the continuous Israeli closure of the Gaza Strip, which harmfully affects the free and sustained movement of personnel, students and humanitarian relief items and requests Israel to immediately ease this closure ...

13. Reaffirms that the two concerned sites located in Al-Khalil/Hebron and in Bethlehem are an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and shares the conviction affirmed by the international community that the two sites are of religious significance for Judaism, Christianity and Islam;

14. Deplores the ongoing Israeli excavations, works, construction of private roads for settlers and of a Wall inside the Old City of Al-Khalil/Hebron which are illegal under international law and harmfully affect the authenticity and integrity of the site, and the subsequent denial of freedom of movement and freedom of access to places of worship and asks Israel, the occupying Power, to end all violations which are not in conformity with the provisions of relevant UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions;

15. Regrets the visual impact of the Wall on the site of Bilal Ibn Rabah Mosque/Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem as well as the strict ban on access of Palestinian Christian and Muslim worshippers to the site, and demands that the Israeli authorities restore the original character of the landscape around the site and to lift the ban on access to it ...

**Motion approved by 22 votes to 20 with 26 abstentions or absences**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002481/248139e.pdf>

### **Motion on Occupied Palestine: 201 EX/PX/DR.31.2**

... 4. Deplores the damaging impact of the military confrontations on the fields of competence of UNESCO in the Gaza Strip, particularly education and cultural institutions

and calls for ending measures that prevent the reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of schools in the Gaza Strip;

5. Deeply concerned by the Israeli army violations against Palestinian universities and schools, demands that the Israeli authorities immediately halt actions that violate UNESCO principles and the provisions of the world declaration for education for all (1990) and reaffirms, in this regard, that schools, universities and cultural heritage sites enjoy special protection and should not be targeted;

6. Expresses its growing concern about the harmful impact of the Wall on the activities of educational and cultural institutions, and demands, in this regard, that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all of its settlement activities, including the construction of the Wall and other measures aimed at altering the character, status and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem and the Cremisan Monastery in the Bethlehem Governorate, which harm the social fabric of Palestinian society and prevent Palestinian school children and students from exercising fully their right to education;

7. Notes with deep concern the Israeli censorship of the Palestinian curricula of schools and universities in East Jerusalem, and urges the Israeli authorities to immediately halt this censorship ...

9. Deeply regrets the destruction by the Israeli authorities of schools, including the school in Abu Nuwar and the school in Tana, and calls on the Israeli authorities to halt plans for further demolition, including of the school in Khan Al-Ahmar ...

**Result of the vote not yet available**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002481/248137e.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>

Due to the General Election, this Bill will not proceed further.

#### **\*\* Assisted Dying Bill**

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

Due to the General Election, this Bill will not proceed further.

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

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

Due to the General Election, this Bill will not proceed further.

[TOP](#)

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

#### **\*\* closes in 10 days**

**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>

[TOP](#)

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO29438