

# Political Affairs Digest

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

## Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Israel](#)

[Foreign Affairs](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Debate

#### Queen's Speech

col 381 **Baroness Flather:** ... the Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, who has retired ... said that not one thing in sharia is non-discriminatory against women. We are allowing this to go on in this country. No system such as sharia should have been allowed to take root in this country, but we have allowed it because we do not like to be nasty to anybody. It does not matter if half the Muslim population has no rights, because we must not be nasty to them. Well, we should be. It is time for us to protect our values.

...

People may say, "Let's not do anything: it is about their religion and culture". But if religion and culture hit at the most fundamental values of this country, the loss will be ours. We will lose our own values ...

... sharia is not really a proper law as such. It is not a law in the Koran, although it is based on Koranic principles. It may have been acceptable in the 7th century, but we are now in 21st-century Britain. Should it be acceptable today? It should not. ...

col 386 **Lord Roberts of Llandudno:** ... Years ago, I dreamed of a country that could be a model of moral leadership ... I thought of India when Mahatma Gandhi was there. I thought of the victims of the Holocaust, who had been through so much trauma themselves that they could surely lead, but that was not so. ...

col 397 **Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice:** ... when the terrorists self-identify as Muslims and cloak themselves in ideology and theology at the same time ... we need to be very careful about denying all links. To do that is to disempower the moderate reformers who are campaigning every day against the fusing of this religion and politics, and who are challenging the scriptural basis that the extremists claim. ...

col 416 **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** ... As Minister for Faith, I have had the privilege over the past few weeks to speak to leaders of different faiths from across the country. I have heard and seen first-hand how communities from all sorts of different backgrounds have responded to recent terror incidents, supporting each other in the face of cruel and unspeakable terror. ...

When I went down to speak with faith leaders after the atrocious terrorist attack on Muslims in Finsbury Park, there were Rabbi Gluck and Rabbi Pinter of the Haredi Jewish community in Stamford Hill. They were not just there; they had been there all night, standing alongside their Muslim brothers and sisters ... There were members of the

Christian community there too. It was truly inspiring. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-06-27/debates/A4E7BDD8-94A4-4C34-A740-DE0C36289C01/Queen%E2%80%99SSpeech>

## House of Commons Written Answers

### Hate Crime

**Paul Flynn** [941] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of hate crime have been reported in the last 12 months.

**Sarah Newton:** The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police on an annual basis. In 2015/16, the most recently published data, the police recorded 62,518 hate crimes in England and Wales. The statistical bulletin, which includes data for earlier years, can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2015-to-2016>

This Government is committed to tackling hate crime. The UK has a strong legislative framework to tackle hate crime. We are working across Government with police, (including National Community Tensions Team), the Crown Prosecution Service and community partners to send out a clear message that hate crime will not be tolerated and we will vigorously pursue and prosecute those who commit these crimes.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-23/941/>

### Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

**Tracy Brabin** [765] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places of worship that have applied for security support from the scheme for security funding for places of worship have had work completed in (a) Batley and Spen, (b) each region of the UK and (c) total.

**Sarah Newton:** The First year of the places of worship scheme was open from 26 July to 4 October 2016. Work has been completed at 54 places of worship, which can be broken down by region as follows: Kent (1), Devon (3), Lincolnshire (2), Hertfordshire (3), Wales (2), Shropshire (1), Staffordshire (2), London (9), Cheshire (1), Birmingham (7), Yorkshire (9), Gloucestershire (4), Worcestershire (1), Tyne & Wear (1), Hampshire (1), Bedfordshire (2), Dorset (1), West Midlands (1), County Durham (1), Norfolk (1)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/765/>

### Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

**Tracy Brabin** [770] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places of worship applied for security support from the scheme for security funding for places of worship in (a) Batley and Spen, (b) each region and constituent part of the United Kingdom and (c) total.

**Sarah Newton:** The first year of the places of worship scheme was open from 26 July to 4 October 2016.

286 places of worship applied, which can be broken down by region as follows:

First Year – 286

Bedfordshire (10), Birmingham (14), Cambridgeshire (2), Cheshire (7), County Durham (2), Devon (4), Dorset (4), Derbyshire (2), Essex (8), Gloucestershire (15), Hampshire (1), Hertfordshire (5), Kent (7), Lancashire (15), London (68), Leicestershire (5), Lincolnshire (4), Merseyside (7), Northamptonshire (1),

Oxfordshire (3), Sussex (4), Surrey (6), Staffordshire (70), Tyne and Wear (9), West Midlands (19), Wiltshire (6), Worcestershire (2), Wales (13) and Yorkshire (33).

In the second year of the scheme, 54 places of worship applied broken down as follows:

Second Year – 54

Kent (1), Devon (3), Lincolnshire (2), Hertfordshire (3), Wales (2), Shropshire (1), Staffordshire (2), London (9), Cheshire (1), Birmingham (7), Yorkshire (9), Gloucestershire (4), Worcestershire (1), Tyne & Wear (1), Hampshire (1), Bedfordshire (2), Dorset (1), West Midlands (1), County Durham (1), Norfolk (1)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/770/>

## House of Commons Library

**Briefing Paper: Coroners' investigations and inquests**

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03981/SN03981.pdf>

## Scottish Government

### Increasing organ and tissue donation

... Public Health Minister Aileen Campbell has confirmed plans to bring forward legislation during this Parliament after 82% of consultation responses supported the move.

This will add to the package of measures already in place to increase donation. Work with stakeholders will continue, to ensure that the system is developed in a way which will do no harm to trust in the NHS or to the safety of organ donation.

Ms Campbell said: "...I can confirm that we intend to bring forward legislation to introduce a soft opt-out system. This will build on the significant improvements already made as a result of the Donation and Transplantation plan for Scotland. That progress is testament to the great many people who work tirelessly to facilitate organ and tissue donation and transplantation. ...

We need to continue doing what we can in order to help reduce the numbers of people in Scotland waiting for transplants. Moving to an opt out system of organ and tissue donation will be part of the long term culture change in attitudes to encourage people to support donation. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.gov.scot/news/increasing-organ-and-tissue-donation>

[TOP](#)

## [Israel](#)

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Khaled Nazzal

**Joan Ryan** [583] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has had discussions with the Palestinian Authority on the naming of a square in Jenin after Khaled Nazzal.

**Alistair Burt:** We have not had any discussions on this specific issue with the Palestinian Authority. A UK delegation led by the Foreign and Commonwealth

Office Permanent Under-Secretary did raise the issue of incitement with the PA on 21 June. The UK continues to urge the Palestinian leadership to avoid engaging in, or encouraging, any type of action and language that makes it more difficult to achieve a culture of peaceful coexistence and a negotiated solution to the conflict.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/583/>

### Israeli Settlements

**Lyn Brown [878]** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Israeli Government on its approval of the first new settlement in the West Bank in over 20 years, Amichai; and if he will make a statement.

**Alistair Burt:** On 31 March the Foreign Secretary issued a statement condemning the Israeli government's decision to found this new settlement deep in the West Bank. I discussed the issue of settlements, including "Amichai" with the Israeli ambassador on 22 June. Our ambassador in Tel Aviv also expressed our grave concerns to the Israeli authorities on 31 March over this settlement.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/878/>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-statement-on-plans-for-a-new-settlement-in-the-west-bank>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Jim Shannon (62) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Six Day War** – That this House commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the Six Day War when Israel stood against unprovoked attacks and won a stunning victory in just six days; congratulates the Israeli Defence Force and its ability to defeat its enemies and to safeguard peace; and urges all to keep the peace in the Middle East.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2017-19/62>

## Scottish Parliament Motions

**S5M-06297.1 Jackson Carlaw: 10th Anniversary of Israel Tightening its Blockade on Gaza** – As an amendment to motion S5M-06297 in the name of Ivan McKee (10th Anniversary of Israel Tightening its Blockade on Gaza), leave out from "blockade" to end and insert "restrictions on movement from, and imports into, the Gaza Strip; understands that this was a direct result of the violent takeover of the area by the terrorist organisation, Hamas, in 2007, which, it believes, has subsequently used imported materials to construct weapons and military infrastructure; acknowledges that the Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement, the so-called 'Hamas Charter', calls for the destruction of the democratic state of Israel; believes that Israel, like any other responsible country, must put the principal duty of protecting its citizens against terror at the forefront of its actions; condemns Hamas on what it sees as its mistreatment of Gazans; believes that the people of Gaza who have often lost out on the benefit of humanitarian aid because Hamas chooses to use it for the purposes of terror rather than providing help; understands that it is estimated that Hamas used hundreds of thousands of tonnes of concrete and an estimated £63 million to construct as many as 32 tunnels into Israel for terror purposes, which were subsequently destroyed by Israel in 2014 during Operation Protective Edge; believes that, since then, Hamas has continued to construct these tunnels and other infrastructure to kill Israelis of all creeds; thanks Israel

on what it sees as its continuing support of reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip following that operation, despite the security risks involved; believes that these efforts have included Israel approving the importation of materials in January 2017, which were capable of assisting in the rebuilding of 1,500 homes and an expanding its border crossings with Gaza to handle up to 800 truckloads of goods per day, at a cost of £6.4 million; welcomes the medical support that Israel is providing to the Gaza Strip; understands that, in 2016, over 10,000 Gazans crossed into Israel to seek medical treatment and that Israel supplies 100 tonnes of medical supplies to Gaza every week; welcomes the reported increase in the amount water supplied to Gaza from Israel, from 5 million to 10 million cubic metres annually; is astonished by what it understands is the electricity crisis currently affecting the Gaza Strip, which sees many residents with only three to four hours of power per day because of the feud between Fatah and Hamas; acknowledges that Egypt also imposes a blockade on Gaza along its border; believes that the Egyptian blockade appears to be deliberately ignored in order to support an anti-Israel agenda; understands that, since August 2013, the Egyptian army has destroyed hundreds of Hamas' tunnels that have been instrumental in smuggling weapons to Salafist IS-linked terrorists in the Sinai peninsula; considers that the people who singularly focus on Israel knowingly ignore what it sees as the crimes of the Palestinian Authority against the Palestinian people, and calls for MSPs to take a more nuanced and informed approach on matters concerning the Palestinian-Israeli conflict."

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-06297.1>

*The Motion to which the above is an amendment can be read at*

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-06297>

**S5M-06393 Jackson Carlaw: Hadas Malka** – That the Parliament mourns the life of Hadas Malka, who was reportedly killed in a coordinated stabbing and shooting attack in Jerusalem on 16 June 2017; understands that Malka, aged 23, served as an Israeli Border Police officer, during which time she responded to gunfire near Damascus Gate, where two Palestinian terrorists had attacked border police officers with a homemade submachine gun and knives; further understands that, in responding to the incident, Malka was attacked by a third assailant and sustained critical injuries; condemns what it considers this act of terrorism and the irresponsible BBC reporting of the attack; believes that the BBC initially published a headline focusing on the deaths of the attackers, who were all shot dead, rather than the lives of the victims; understands that the initial headline read “Three Palestinians killed after deadly stabbing in Jerusalem”, and was latterly changed to “Israeli policewoman stabbed to death in Jerusalem”; considers that the BBC has a duty to be an impartial broadcaster and present information in a manner that does not distort reality; demands an end to what it considers is an increased threat of Palestinian terrorism, which it understands has seen the life’s blood of 50 victims spilt since the 389 stabbing, car ramming and shooting attacks began in September 2015, and ultimately calls for the resumption of direct peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, without preconditions, in order to achieve a lasting peace, with a secure Israel existing alongside a viable Palestinian state.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-06393>

[TOP](#)

## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Middle East: Religious Freedom

**Jim Shannon** [271] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with governments in the Middle East to encourage a better understanding of human rights provision relating to inter-faith marriages.

**Alistair Burt:** As far as we are aware there have been no such discussions in recent times. The British Government is clear, however, that discrimination on the basis of faith is a violation of universal human rights. The right not to be discriminated against by the state extends to the provision of marriage.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/271/>

[TOP](#)

## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### Scottish Parliament

**Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

[TOP](#)

## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

**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](#)

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