

# Political Affairs Digest

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Debate

#### Holocaust Memorial Day 2018

*col 1130 Andrew Percy (Conservative):* ... All Members are indebted to Karen Pollock, who is in the Gallery today, and to all her team for the fantastic work they do.

Holocaust Memorial Day commemorates the date on which allied forces liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau and was established by the Bill introduced by former Member Andrew Dismore following his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1999. The first Holocaust Memorial Day was commemorated on 27 January 2001.

Last year's theme was how life goes on, and this year's theme is the power of words, which is a reminder that the holocaust started not with gas chambers, round ups and cattle trucks but with hate-filled words. That is perhaps of great resonance today, as we consider the continuing blight of anti-Semitism, prejudice and intolerance in our society and, sadly, in our politics. I am proud that as a Government, with strong cross-party support, we adopted the international definition of anti-Semitism, which UK police forces are sadly having to use more than they should. ...

It is difficult to explain to young people that within living memory and within the lifetime of people here today ... whole communities were wiped out across Europe. Communities that had been there for centuries and that were integral parts of the history of those European states, and of Europe itself, no longer exist. ...

It is very sad that in Britain in 2017-18 anti-Semitism and racism at all should be a problem, but new figures revealed by the Community Security Trust last July showed that anti-Semitic incidents against the Jewish community in the UK have reached unprecedented levels—the highest levels of hate crime against Jews since records began 33 years ago. ...

... a study by the CST and the Institute for Jewish Policy Research found that stronger anti-Israel attitudes are linked to stronger anti-Semitic attitudes among Britons. In last year's debate, I said from the Dispatch Box that I was becoming increasingly concerned about what I call the Israelification of anti-Semitism. That is not to say that people should not be allowed legitimately to call out the Government or Israel, or any other Government, but criticism of the Israeli Government is being used by some for more sinister purposes. That Israelification needs to be called out. ...

... during the campaign, in June last year, I was approached and screamed at for being "Israeli scum" and "Zionist scum". ...

We have to be honest that we have a new threat: the new smear that anti-Semitism is being used as a cover for other things or as part of a witch hunt. I do not wish to step into party politics too much, but it is important that in debates like this we call out campaigns such as Labour Against the Witchhunt, which has called for “the immediate lifting of all suspensions and expulsions from Labour Party membership which were...connected to the ‘anti-Semitism’ smear campaign.”

This is a minority—the vast majority of Labour party members and people in politics throughout the country have no truck with any of this—but let us remember what some of those suspensions have been for. They have been for people who have claimed that Judaism is not a religion but a crime syndicate; people who have called holocaust education in schools a holocaust indoctrination programme; people who have questioned what good Jews have done; and people who have claimed that the Jews financed the slaved trade and who attacked Holocaust Memorial Day—the very day we are debating and respecting today. We have to guard against those who seek to spread this new smear against anti-Semitism, in the strongest way we can. ...

*col 1134 Ruth Smeeth (Labour):* ... Does the case that he has just highlighted not make the role of the Community Security Trust even more important this year and in the years to come, and should we not be throwing our weight behind it, and urging everyone else to do so too?

**Andrew Percy:** ... I could not agree more with what she said about the role of the CST. ...

*col 1135 Louise Ellman (labour Co-op):* ... Now, more than 70 years later, the scourge of anti-Semitism still stains our society. Anti-Semitism is not confined to one strand of politics—it is on the right and on the left....

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Community Security Trust, which so accurately monitors anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic discourse. Its latest report shows a shocking 30% recorded rise in anti-Semitic incidents in the UK for the first six months of 2017, with 767 such incidents reported.

The rise of anti-Semitic hate crime on our streets, meeting little or no challenge from the authorities, is a matter of growing concern. For example, it was reported that, on 11 December 2017, Tahra Ahmed, a volunteer running an aid network helping the survivors of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, claimed that the 71 people who perished were “burned in a Jewish sacrifice.”

Mark Gardiner of CST rightly condemned this as “a new depth of grotesque anti-Semitic racism.”

On 8 December 2017, at the American embassy protests against President Trump’s announcement recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, demonstrators chanted:

“Khaybar Khaybar, iya Yahud, Jaish Mohammed, sa Yahud”.

Translated, that means, “Remember Khaybar, the army of Mohammed is returning.” This refers to the battle of Khaybar in 628, where Jews were massacred and expelled from the town in what is now Saudi Arabia. Swastikas were also displayed at that demonstration. ... No action has been taken against this anti-Semitic hate speech on our streets. Why? ...

*col 1136 Daniel Kawczynski (Conservative):* ... at this time we ought to be celebrating and commemorating the Christians who gave up their lives to save Jewish families during the second world war ... The brother of my grandfather, Jan Kawczynski, hid Jewish families on his estate. When the Germans found out, they shot his daughter and his wife, and then him. ...

**Theresa Villiers (Conservative):** ... We are incredibly lucky in north London to be a place where many Jewish people have chosen to make their home. They are a community who have profoundly enriched our culture and quality of life ... So for me, one of the reasons why I find the stories of those who perished during the holocaust to be so distressing is because it feels very close to home—so disturbing; so personal—to know that this horror was inflicted on the parents, grandparents and wider family of people who

are such a core part of my network of friends, family and colleagues ...

In my view, the holocaust was the single greatest act of evil in human history. ... The numbers dying at the hands of Stalin were as great, and atrocities such as the holodomor in Ukraine were certainly acts of the most unspeakable cruelty, but the attempt by the Nazi regime to wipe out an entire ethnic group and harness 20th-century technology to deliver murder on an industrial scale seems to me to be without parallel in terms of the sheer stomach-turning depravity and evil of what occurred. ...

*col 1137* **Joan Ryan (Labour):** ... Holocaust Memorial Day marks the darkest hour in human history. We remember and mourn the 6 million Jews murdered, as well as the Roma, disabled, and LGBT victims of Nazi atrocities. We have a moral responsibility to listen to the stories of holocaust survivors. They speak not only for themselves but for those who did not survive to tell their story. ...

The holocaust reminds us of where racism and anti-Semitism can lead. We must remember that the holocaust was the end of a process of state-sponsored racism that began on the streets of Munich and Berlin. The twisted road to Auschwitz began with a political party whose racist rhetoric won an election in a democratic society. There must be no complacency in the fight against anti-Semitism. We must tackle racism at its roots, weeding it out wherever we find it.

I applaud the Government for their adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism. It gives us clarity in this fight, and it is unequivocal in stating that holocaust denial, comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany and allegations of Jewish conspiracies are modern forms of this ancient hatred. ...

Despite the horrors of the holocaust, anti-Semitism has not disappeared. We have even seen its rise in British society recently, including, I am ashamed to say, in my own party. We must condemn unequivocally and combat relentlessly this despicable trend. We must remember that the fight against racism is also one of education. We must fight for our anti-racist values, and ensure we instil a respect for tolerance, equality and human rights in future generations. I would like to thank Karen Pollock and the Holocaust Educational Trust for their dedication to this task ...

*col 1139* **Bob Stewart (Conservative):** Just before she died, my mother told me that she went to Belsen as a Special Operations Executive operative in April 1945. I asked why she had never ever told me that before. She said, "Because I was ashamed." I said, "Why were you ashamed?" She said, "Because this happened when my generation was living, and I felt ashamed that it happened. We were responsible because we did nothing about it in England."

**Bob Blackman (Conservative):** ... I will never forget my visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the young people who started out brightly at the beginning of the day, but who, as the horrors unfolded, became quieter and quieter. We ended the day on those terrible railway lines, with candles, and that place brings home to everyone what can happen if people stand idly by. We knew, and were instructed, about the systematic approach—this was not a few people who were mad or crazy; it was a systematic approach that involved hundreds, if not thousands, of people who co-operated with the attempt to eliminate the Jewish population. ...

*col 1140* We also have the challenge of combating anti-Semitism on university campuses. One current challenge is that many Jewish children go to Jewish schools and are not exposed to anti-Semitism until they get to university. In my view, we are not preparing our young people sufficiently for what they may face, and I am delighted that the Government are taking action to combat anti-Semitism on university campuses by sponsoring visits for sabbatical officers to go to Auschwitz-Birkenau and to see at first hand what can happen if matters get out of hand. ...

**Lyn Brown (Labour):** As we know, the Nazis created and peddled myths about Jewish people; they dehumanised them, representing them as an existential threat to ordinary German citizens. Their propaganda was massively and horrifically effective. Hate-filled words enabled their crimes. ...

The state-sponsored propaganda also had effect in the Nazis' puppet states. In Estonia, many of the mass killings of the holocaust were perpetrated by local collaborators, with very little oversight by the Nazi German occupying force. In 1941, Belgian collaborators launched a pogrom in Antwerp, burning synagogues and targeting the chief rabbi. It was among the first of the events of the holocaust in Belgium. The yellow star law had not even been introduced. ...

The rhetoric has not gone away, in the UK or elsewhere. We have heard about the Nazi white supremacists marching through Charlottesville, their faces uncovered, some sporting machine guns, chanting, "Jews will not replace us"—a direct repetition of the Nazi lie. In an example from another continent, in October, following the debate last year in this place, the Myanmar embassy sent me a dossier, at the heart of which is a list of historical crimes attributed to the Rohingya Muslims as a group. It painted them as an existential threat to the Buddhist people of Rakhine, enemies manipulating the international community into sympathy with them. ...

The language of extermination has power because the ground has been prepared. Nazis used teachers, newspapers, newsreels and the radio to do that; today, sowers of hate are equipped with the internet and social media. The propaganda of hate builds suspicion and prejudice until ordinary people believe a complete and utter lie. ...

*col 1142 Paul Masterton (Conservative):* ... History has shown that words dictate action, and we must continue to challenge the language and views not just of our opponents but our friends, because when we normalise hatred, it leads to a sense that terrible horrors are part of the normal.

One morning, Hans Frank gave a speech at the University in Lviv. He announced the killing of 100,000 individuals. In the afternoon, he went and played a game of chess with his deputy's wife, and he lost. He played a second game of chess, and he lost. What agitated him was not the immense mass killing in his name, but his failure against a woman in two games of chess. ...

*col 1143 Stephen Twigg (Labour Co-op):* ... Holocaust Memorial Day has a vital twin importance: remembering the Nazi holocaust—so appallingly denied by some—but also dedicating ourselves to challenging modern-day anti-Semitism, racism, genocide and other mass atrocities. ...

*col 1146 Stephen Lloyd (Liberal Democrat):* ... Let me also congratulate the indomitable Karen Pollock, who is in the public Gallery and whom I have known for many years. Without her, I do not believe that this day, and the impact and reach that it has across the country, would be as strong. She really does deserve an enormous amount of credit. ...

*col 1148 Ian Paisley (DUP):* ... Through the project, 166 students from 76 schools across Northern Ireland, as well as 27 teachers, were able to take part in a unique educational experience laid on by the Holocaust Educational Trust. ...

We say that the term "the power of words" is important, but when we get the chance to speak to those students, we realise that the power of silence is really incredible, as they could not form words due to the tears coursing down their cheeks as they wondered what could have been, after seeing at first hand man's hatred of man and how we must strive to ensure that such a thing never happens again ...

*col 1149 Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op):* ... The holocaust has deeply affected my family. My parents were born in 1946, and I remember sitting in my great-aunt's kitchen in Tel Aviv as a young child, seeing the numbers tattooed on her arm and asking my father, "Why?" She was in the camps. She did not have her own children or grandchildren. I had no aunts or uncles or cousins to play with, because the Nazis experimented on her and she could not have children. This hollow shell cast a dark spectre over my family—all the relatives I never met or who never survived, and the children they never had. ...

Every day, I try to work with that memory of my family and the dark spectre of the holocaust. ...

*col 1150 Christine Jardine (Liberal Democrat):* ... When my daughter has visited other

memorials she has talked about them, but not when she came home from visiting Theresienstadt, which represented something more. She faced up to the fact that it was all real; that this was where so many stories, like that of the little girl living in a loft whose powerful words she had fallen in love with, had ended; and that if that horror were ever to return, many of the people she loved would meet the same fate. ...

*col 1153* **Jim Shannon (DUP):** ... I long to see a generation of Nicholas Wintons reaching out from the UK again, making a difference to the world and leaving a legacy of hard work and moral character for later generations. ...

The sight of an actual lady in that programme thanking Sir Nicholas is something that is now imprinted in my memory, and in the memories of many others. ... Seeing the faces of those who managed to survive the camps but knowing that 6 million did not makes it very real. As that realisation sank in, so did the realisation that now more than ever we must make a concerted effort to teach our children not just the figures—it is not only about the 6 million figure, which is horrific and shocking enough—but that these were lives lost, that an entire nation was slaughtered, that a people were forever wounded, and that this was an atrocity that can never be allowed to happen again. ...

*col 1156* **Neil Gray (SNP):** ... I join others in paying tribute to Karen Pollock, the chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, and its “Lessons from Auschwitz” project, which since 1999 has enabled over 30,000 students and teachers to see at first hand the horror and brutality and “to clearly highlight what can happen if prejudice and racism become acceptable.” ...

“The Holocaust did not start in the gas chambers but with hate filled words.”

Those words did not suddenly spring into being at the inaugural Nuremberg rally or from the venomous pages of “Mein Kampf”. It must be acknowledged that words and discrimination directed against Jewish people have been around for centuries, if not millennia, across the entire European continent and beyond, affecting all sections of society, all religions and all forms of state. Indeed, George Orwell noted in his essay on anti-Semitism:

“There has been a perceptible antisemitic strain in English literature from Chaucer onwards, and without even getting up from this table to consult a book I can think of passages which if written now would be stigmatised as antisemitism, in the works of Shakespeare, Smollett, Thackeray, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley and various others.”

While there can be no doubt that it is the Nazi leaders and those who carried out their orders who bear sole responsibility for the holocaust, their actions and beliefs were made easier to implement and for to others to subscribe to as a result of the norms and values that had been constructed over a long period of time, and eventually found fertile ground in 1920s Germany, in the toxic world of the Nazi party and those who carried out the work on their behalf. ...

The actions that the Nazis carried out may be beyond comprehension, but we can never be complacent or try to pretend that such actions took place in a vacuum and had no precedent. ...

*col 1159* **The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Rishi Sunak):** ... As the last of those who survived the holocaust are lost to us, the weight of those words, stories and memories only becomes greater. ... We must remind a new generation of where the road of prejudice, hatred and dictatorship ultimately leads.

In truth, the words so often associated with the holocaust—“never again”—have too often proved false. Whether in the tragedies of Srebrenica or Rwanda, the violence that stems from prejudice has never truly left us. Sadly, as we heard today, that prejudice is still prevalent. A comprehensive survey by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research concluded that 30% of the UK population hold one or more anti-Semitic attitudes—30%. Anti-Semitic incidents recorded by the Community Security Trust rose by 30% in the first half of last year, to their highest level since the trust began collecting records in 1984.

The truth that the holocaust teaches us is that the fight against anti-Semitism, racism, and religious intolerance never truly ends. Every generation must fight it again, and every generation must choose between a common humanity, which is the shared inheritance of all, and the narrow bigotry that sees some as more human than others. ...

*col 1160* The holocaust did not begin in the gas chambers; it began in the minds of ordinary people—people who, spurred on by Nazi propaganda, allowed spoken words slowly to erode the value of Jewish lives. The story is always the same. From so-called “class enemies” in Cambodia, to the so-called “cockroaches” in Rwanda, the terrible power of words is all too clear.

Education is crucial to fighting prejudice, and I note that many Members of the House have powerful memories of their visits to Auschwitz-Birkenau. For that we must of course thank Karen Pollock, the CEO of the Holocaust Educational Trust, who along with her team is an inspiration to us all. ...

We must also pay tribute to the work of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and its chief executive officer, Olivia Marks-Woldman, who along with her team delivered the most successful Holocaust Memorial Day to date last year, with almost 8,000 local events. The Government are proud to support and work along these and many other commendable organisations. ...

*col 1161* **Andrew Percy:** ... I will end where I started. Words are important. Anti-Semitism is a stain on humanity, society and our politics at the moment. We must all match our words with action, and that applies to all of us in this House, including those at the very highest levels of our political parties.

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-18/debates/74DD6E76-8A7C-4522-80CB-853EA6B69745/HolocaustMemorialDay>

## House of Lords Oral Answer

### Holocaust Education

**Lord Polak (Conservative):** My Lords, can I bring us back home and welcome this week’s announcement by Sajid Javid that the Government will fund a new strand of the Lessons from Auschwitz programme in support of the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Union of Jewish Students to tackle anti-Semitism, prejudice and intolerance on campus? Does the Minister agree with me that it may be a welcome initiative if each political party—some more than others—would ensure that all future candidates be taken on such an educational visit before they enter Parliament?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My noble friend is quite right to raise the important issue of anti-Semitism. It is a scourge that we all despise, and it is important that we come together and raise our voices wherever we see religion being used to discriminate, be it anti-Semitism or Islamophobia—or any particular view or belief. On the specific point of Auschwitz, if I may provide a personal anecdote, I remember visiting Auschwitz with schoolchildren just before I took on my ministerial responsibilities at the Department for Communities and Local Government. As anyone who has been there knows, while we have heard about it and may have seen films about it, the first experience you have is chilling, and then you reflect on the importance of what is in front of you. I totally agree with my noble friend: it ensures that your mind becomes focused, that never means never, and that we never allow such a genocide to take place again.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-18/debates/7AE8F4F2-6CA0-4534-82BB-30AFD08E79F0/FreedomOfReligionAndBelief#contribution-2B4F766C-1C4D-4678-94C0-9D7D8E96410D>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Palestinians: Religious Freedom**

**Fiona Bruce (Conservative)** [122673] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the level of religious freedom in the Palestinian Territories; and what steps the Government is taking to promote and protect the right to freedom of religion or belief in that country.

**Alistair Burt:** While we have not made a recent assessment of this issue, freedom of religion and belief remains a human rights priority for this Government. It is a fundamental freedom which underpins many other human rights. Our Consulate General in Jerusalem regularly meets a variety of religious leaders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and has stressed to the Palestinian Authority the importance of protecting freedom of religion and belief.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-15/122673/>

### UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

#### **Foreign Affairs Council: 22 January**

**The Minister for Europe and the Americas (Sir Alan Duncan):** ... Ministers will host Palestinian President Abbas for a lunch and discuss prospects for the MEPP, including longstanding EU support for a negotiated two-state solution and EU support for Palestinian reconciliation. ...

**To read the full statement see**

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-18/debates/18011819000012/ForeignAffairsCouncil22January>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Lords Oral Answers

#### **Freedom of Religion and Belief**

**Lord Suri (Conservative):** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendations of the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Freedom of Religion and Belief, *Article 18: From Rhetoric to Reality*.

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon):** My Lords, Her Majesty's Government warmly welcome the report, which is well-informed and demonstrates the deep commitment of its authors. I wrote to the all-party parliamentary group on 8 December with an initial response to the recommendations, several of which have already been reflected in the Government's approach to freedom of religion or belief. As we continue to push forward on this issue, we will continue to reflect on the recommendations made in this excellent report.

**Lord Suri:** I thank my noble friend the Minister for his response. He will know that the Government stated in their response to the APPG report that the stabilisation unit meets with religious and other key actors overseas to better understand FoRB. I am pleased the Government have expressed a desire to look for ways to strengthen this work. Can the Minister explain how information gathered in these meetings is currently being fed into

government programming, and to government posts, to help better understand and tackle patterns of religious persecution? Can he also inform your Lordships' House how he is tracking and assessing the responses from ambassadors and high commissioners to the letters he sent, which asked what they are doing to advance freedom of religion and belief?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** I am pleased to inform my noble friend, and indeed the House in general, that there is very much cross-government co-ordination in this respect. I am delighted that, in our approach to the importance of focus on freedom of religion and belief, there is underlying support, by colleagues across DfID in particular, on ensuring that that essential element of our human rights provision is also understood across the world. On the specific issue of the different posts, I wrote to every post shortly after taking up the position of Minister for Human Rights, and in that regard we have had a positive response. Most recently, together with my right honourable friend Mark Field MP, the Minister for Asia, I wrote to each high commission and ambassador for the priority countries of Asia, and we have received very positive responses about the importance of prioritising freedom of religion and belief in our diplomatic efforts across the world.

**Lord Collins of Highbury (Labour):** My Lords, I declare an interest as a member of the APPG. I certainly support its work and its report, but religion is often used as a cover for oppressing other minorities, particular the LGBT community. A charity I am a patron of, an HIV centre in the East End of London, is working with faith groups on practical ways we can build respect and address concerns. Does the Foreign Office see the benefit of this sort of work, and is it supporting such work in other countries?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The noble Lord knows I agree with him totally. We have seen exactly those kind of initiatives working domestically, which are of great value. In discussions we have had—and he will be aware of this—I have often said that faith communities should approach all these issues, including those of LGBT rights, as defined human rights issues. When we look at these issues through the prism of religion, the issues of fairness, equality and justice should prevail.

**Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench):** My Lords, as a member of the APPG for Freedom of Religion or Belief, I fully support the need to look beyond rhetoric towards positive action to protect freedom of belief and human rights. Will the Minister agree that we urgently need to decouple the linking of trade with human rights? Only last September, the then Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon, cautioned against criticising human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia because of the danger of losing contracts. Does the Minister agree with the Soviet human rights activist Andrei Sakharov, who said that we must always be even-handed in our pursuit of human rights?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** I believe that is our approach. Through our diplomatic corps, to whom I pay great tribute, we are able to have both public but also, importantly, private and candid discussions with countries around the world on the importance of human rights and the equality of human rights. The other area of opportunity where I believe the UK can play a key role is that, as we build democratic institutions and countries look towards their constitutions, those constitutions must reflect equal human rights for all.

**Baroness Brinton (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, as a founding member of the APPG, I thank the Minister for his response to the report. Can he provide details about the £600,000-worth of projects funded by the Magna Carta fund which the Government have said have led directly to positive freedom of religion or belief outcomes in 20 countries? If they are so positive, what will the Government do to ensure that the principles behind those projects will be spread elsewhere?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** First, through the Magna Carta fund we have been working in our priority countries to ensure that freedom of religion and belief is raised, not just directly but—a point made earlier by the noble Lord, Lord Collins—building and working with civil society organisations and human rights defenders

within those countries to ensure that they have political, diplomatic and financial support. In further support of those objectives, I am delighted, as I said earlier, that we are working hand in glove with our colleagues at DfID. There is an added fund now of £12 million which is targeted at development assistance but also ensuring that human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, are enshrined in our projects and support across the world.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-18/debates/7AE8F4F2-6CA0-4534-82BB-30AFD08E79F0/FreedomOfReligionAndBelief>

The APPG report referred to above can be read at

<https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/media/Article-18-report-1710.pdf>

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## Other Relevant Information

### European Commission

#### **Countering illegal hate speech online – Commission initiative shows continued improvement, further platforms join**

... Since May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft have committed to combatting the spread of such content in Europe through the Code of Conduct. The third monitoring round shows that the companies are now increasingly fulfilling their commitment to remove the majority of illegal hate speech within 24 hours. However, some further challenges still remain, in particular the lack of systematic feedback to users.

Google+ announced today that they are joining the Code of Conduct, and Facebook confirmed that Instagram would also do so, thus further expanding the numbers of actors covered by it. ...

Since its adoption in May 2016, the Code of Conduct has delivered steady progress in the removal of notified illegal content, as today's evaluation shows:

- On average, IT companies removed 70% of all the illegal hate speech notified to them by the NGOs and public bodies participating in the evaluation. This rate has steadily increased from 28% in the first monitoring round in 2016 and 59% in the second monitoring exercise in May 2017.
- Today, all participating IT Companies fully meet the target of reviewing the majority of notifications within 24 hours, reaching an average of more than 81%. ...

**To read the full press release see**

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-18-261\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-261_en.htm)

#### **Factsheet on the Code of Conduct – 3 round of monitoring**

[http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc\\_id=49286](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc_id=49286)

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## Relevant Legislation

\*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Draft Animal Welfare (Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience) Bill**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/666576/draft-animal-welfare-bill-171212.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666576/draft-animal-welfare-bill-171212.pdf)

## **European Union (Withdrawal) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/europeanunionwithdrawal.html>

## **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

## **Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

## **Scottish Parliament**

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

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

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**Draft Animal Welfare (Sentencing and Recognition of Sentience) Bill** (closing date 31 January 2018)

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-health-and-welfare/consultation-on-the-animal-welfare-bill/>

**Introducing 'opt-out' consent for organ and tissue donation in England** (closing date 6 March 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/introducing-opt-out-consent-for-organ-and-tissue-donation-in-england>

**Promoting Organ Donation and Transplantation in Northern Ireland** (closing date 9 March 2018)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/promoting-organ-donation-and-transplantation-northern-ireland>

**Electoral Reform (Scotland)** (closing date 12 March 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529431.pdf>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438