

# Political Affairs Digest

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

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Antisemitism

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123016] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment his Department has made of the level of antisemitism and Holocaust denial; and what steps his Department is taking to tackle antisemitism and Holocaust denial.

**Heather Wheeler:** We work closely with the Community Security Trust, the Police and the Home Office to tackle antisemitic incidents, which have no place in our communities.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government hosts the Antisemitism Working Group which brings together community representatives and officials from across Government to ensure a coordinated response to antisemitism, whether at home, abroad or online.

The UK was also the first country in the world to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of Antisemitism which is a useful tool in understanding how Antisemitism manifests itself in the 21st century.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123016/>

#### Universities: Antisemitism

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123060] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to tackle anti-semitism on university campuses.

**Sam Gyimah:** This government takes anti-Semitism extremely seriously. There is no place in our society - including within higher education – for hatred or any form of harassment, discrimination or racism, including anti-Semitism.

Higher education providers are autonomous organisations, independent from government. They have a clear responsibility to provide a safe and inclusive environment.

In September 2015, the government asked Universities UK (UUK) to set up a Harassment Taskforce to consider what more can be done to address harassment and hate crime on campus, including antisemitism. The taskforce's report, 'Changing the Culture', published in October 2016, recommended a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and hate crime.

On 27 July 2017, UUK published a directory of case studies detailing the innovative projects universities have developed to address the taskforce's recommendations. These include Goldsmith's hate crime reporting centre (case study 11) which is a joint initiative with the local authority in Lewisham and the Metropolitan Police, which provides students and staff with a safe space to report incidents. These are published on UUK's website:

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-case-studies.aspx>. In addition, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has provided £1.8 million for projects to improve responses to hate crime and online harassment on campus.

HEFCE is currently working with UUK to test the sector's response to the Taskforce's recommendations and the results of this will be published early this year.

On the 16 January, the government announced a partnership between the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and the Department for Education. These departments are providing £144,261 of joint funding for a new programme to support universities in tackling antisemitism on campus. The programme will be delivered by the Holocaust Educational Trust and will involve 200 students and university leaders from across the country visiting the former Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Upon their return, they will take part in a seminar, which will deal explicitly with campus issues and how to identify and tackle antisemitism.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123060/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>

### **Universities: Hate Crime**

**Paul Masterton (Conservative)** [123656] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many instances of (a) antisemitism, (b) homophobia and (c) islamophobia on university campuses have been reported to his Department in each of the past 12 months.

**Sam Gyimah:** The Department for Education does not hold this information, however my department and this government takes all forms of hate crime extremely seriously. There is no place in our society – including within higher education – for hatred or any form of harassment, discrimination or racism.

In September 2015, the government asked Universities UK (UUK) to set up a Harassment Taskforce to consider what more can be done to address harassment and hate crime on campus. The taskforce's report, 'Changing the Culture', published in October 2016, recommended a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and hate crime.

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The Higher Education Funding Council for England is currently working with UUK to test the sector's response to the taskforce's recommendations and the full

results will be published in spring 2018.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-18/123656/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>

### **Internet: Bullying**

**Anna Turley (Labour Co-op)** [123945] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of the Royal Foundation's National Action Plan to Tackle Cyberbullying, published on 16 November 2017, to tackle on-line (a) Islamophobia, (b) homophobia and (c) antisemitism.

**Margot James:** The Royal Foundation has played a key role bringing together technology companies with those working hard to protect children, in order to help create industry-driven initiatives and encourage the companies to take their social responsibility seriously.

The Royal Foundation's National Action Plan tackles cyberbullying which can include islamophobia, homophobia and antisemitism. In our Internet Safety Strategy, we consulted on introducing a code of practice, which will build on the Royal Foundation's work. As set out in the Digital Economy Act 2017, the code will address all forms of bullying, insulting, intimidating and humiliating behaviour by setting out guidance for social media providers about what they should do in relation to conduct on their platforms.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123945/>

*The Action Plan referred to above can be read at*

[http://www.royalfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Action-Plan\\_17115-1.pdf](http://www.royalfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Action-Plan_17115-1.pdf)

### **Coroners**

**Matthew Offord (Conservative)** [123683] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what representations his Department has received on the comments of Mary Hassell, a North London Coroner, who has maintained a policy that no body will be prioritised for release and burial because of the religion of the deceased or their family.

**Phillip Lee:** Coroners are independent judicial office holders. As such, it would be inappropriate for Ministers to comment on the reported actions of the Inner North London Senior Coroner.

The Department has received a number of representations, including from the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the London Borough of Camden which funds the Inner North London Coroner Service.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-18/123683/>

### **Faith Schools: Admissions**

**Angela Rayner (Labour)** [124197] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2018 to Question 123136, what the evidential basis is for his statement that faiths opening new faith free schools subject to the 50 per cent cap would contravene religious rules.

**Anne Milton:** The Catholic Church regard the 50% limit on faith admissions as preventing Catholic parents from meeting their obligation to secure a Catholic education for their children and hindering the ability of Catholic Bishops to secure sufficient Catholic provision to meet the needs of Catholic parents, both of which are obligations under Canon law. Given the popularity of Catholic schools among a broad range of parents, they believe the effect of the 50% cap would be to require them to turn away Catholic pupils. The 'Schools that work for everyone'

consultation proposed removing the 50% limit as part of broader plans to enable a wider group of high quality providers to establish new schools. The government will respond to the above consultation in due course.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/124197/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123136/>

### **Religion: Education**

**Rehman Chishti (Conservative)** [903525] To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what discussions the Church of England has had with the Department for Education on ensuring that religious studies remains a priority in schools.

**Caroline Spelman:** The Education Office of the Church of England is in regular dialogue with the Department for Education and is a member of the 'Faith Providers' group, which meets frequently with the Department to discuss a range of issues connected with schools of a religious character. One of the issues that the Office has raised in those discussions is the concern that Religious Education is not included within the EBacc.

The Education Office has also submitted written and oral evidence to the Commission on Religious Education and, following the publication of its interim report, has discussed its findings with the Commissioners. The Education Office is part of a programme run by the Theos Think Tank, bringing together leading players in RE with officials from the Department for Education and also the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government to discuss a range of issues including RE.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/903525/>

## **House of Lords Written Answers**

### **Out-of-school Education: Hackney**

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

**Lord Warner (Crossbench)** [HL4622] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 5 January (HL4335), what evidence they have for the statement that "there are far fewer unregistered schools than many had believed to be the case", in the light of a recent report by the London Borough of Hackney Scrutiny Commission which stated that between 1,000 and 1,500 Charedi boys were in unregistered schools in that Borough; and what assessment they have made of Hackney Council's findings in this regard.

**Lord Warner (Crossbench)** [HL4624] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will consider extending the definition of a school to cover part-time religious settings and expand the powers of entry, inspection and enforcement for local authorities to deal with unregistered schools in the light of recent findings in the London Borough of Hackney of the problems caused by such schools.

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The evidence for the government's statement is in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's annual report, attached, published in December 2017, which includes statistics about the work of Ofsted's unregistered schools team. Over an 18 month period, the Ofsted team looked into many possible settings but determined that only 38 of them had been operating as unregistered schools, and secured that, as at August 2017, 34 of those 38 settings ceased operating illegally.

We are aware of the recent findings in the Borough of Hackney, which refer to between 1,000 – 1,500 Charedi boys in out-of-school settings in that borough. The report made clear that these were yeshivas, offering religious teaching, in settings that do not meet the criteria to register as independent schools, but were operating as out-of-school settings.

The government's Counter Extremism Strategy, published in 2015, set out plans to introduce a new system of oversight for out-of-school settings which teach children intensively, including part-time religious settings. We undertook a call for evidence to learn more about the range of settings, and to determine the potential scope and impact of introducing a regulatory system.

As well as considering the views of those that responded to the call for evidence, the department has been working with a range of stakeholders to strengthen our understanding of these settings, which vary considerably in their characteristics and the activities and education they offer. We will make an announcement on the outcome shortly.

It is Ofsted, rather than local authorities, that have powers in relation to unregistered schools, to collect evidence to support prosecutions. The department and Ofsted operate a joint team on unregistered schools and work together closely on all relevant issues, including on the extent of Ofsted's powers, which are always kept in view.

[Ofsted Annual Report 2016/17](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-10/HL4622/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-10/HL4624/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-12-19/HL4335/>

*The Counter Extremism Strategy referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/470088/51859\\_Cm9148\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf)

## UK Parliament Joint Committee on Human Rights

### **Inquiry into Freedom of Speech in Universities: Oral evidence session**

**Q59 Jeremy Lefroy (Conservative):** ... We have heard a lot of evidence suggesting that the Charity Commission rules are having a chilling effect on free speech. The commission's operational guidance for students' unions states that they may "comment publicly on social, economic, environmental and political issues if"—"if" is in italics—"these relate to its purposes or the way in which it is able to carry out its work", but they "should not comment publicly on issues which do not affect the welfare of students as students". One of the examples given of an issue that does not affect students is "the treatment of political prisoners in a foreign country".

Michelle Russell, do you think that this could have an inhibiting effect on freedom of speech for students' union officers?

**Michelle Russell (Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement, Charity Commission for England and Wales):** ... The guidance you are quoting is our operational guidance ... for staff. As a regulator we take the view that we should be transparent, and we publish our internal guidance. That, I think, is the guidance that you are quoting from, as opposed to our guidance for trustees. ...

**Aarti Thakor (Head of Legal Compliance, Charity Commission for England and**

**Wales):** ... The particular paragraph that you referred to relates to a “should not”. It is not an absolute mandatory requirement. ...

There is a second case, that of Webb and O’Doherty, where effectively that principle is upheld. It states that where corporate conclusions are being expressed on issues that are wider than student-related issues, either by the union or specifically by the trustee board, they run into difficulties, because in effect they may be doing one of two things. They may be engaging in activities that are wider than the strict educational, charitable law context, or, in effect, they are straying into what may be seen as impermissible political activity, because it becomes an end in and of itself rather than a way to further that particular purpose. ...

**Q61 Chair (Harriet Harman, Labour):** Your guidance in 2013 states: “All ... student unions can be challenged on whether they have given due consideration to ... associated risks when they, or one of their affiliated societies, invite controversial ... speakers to address students”. Any student, even if they have the toolkit, the checklist and the guidance, would feel that that is saying, “Be careful, you can be challenged if there is a risk when you invite a controversial speaker”. This is an inquiry into free speech in universities and we are trying to get to the bottom of what might be the inhibitions on free speech. From the point of view of students, toolkits, checklists and guidance from you, obviously emanating from legislation and case law, together with the other guidance I have quoted, surely is inhibiting them. ...

**Michelle Russell:** We do not want that to be the case. The guidance also says that it is absolutely fine to invite controversial speakers to charities. We know that there are charities—students’ unions—that are holding thousands and thousands of events that do invite such speakers. Most of them go untouched and unpassed by us. We get some complaints. Where we have mainly intervened—I say “intervene” in a light sense—we have gone to the charities to say that we have had a complaint because it has breached something or it has interfered with someone’s human rights or freedoms, and asked for a response. ...

... over the past two financial years, there have been about seven cases where we have had to engage with some charities, either on the basis of complaints or because there has been adverse public comment. ...

One of the issues, for example, was that it was holding events that were segregated for men and women, and not on the basis of faith. We said that there were equality issues around whether or not that was permissible under the law. Some of the complaints were about what was said cutting across the human rights of other groups, particularly faith groups, and it being potentially anti-Semitic. It is those sorts of issues that cut across, rather than a controversial or extremist speaker. ...

**Chair:** The things that you have just described, should they not go to the Equality and Human Rights Commission? I appreciate that the complaints came to you and therefore you did your job, but should they not go to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which has all the expertise and is set up to deal with these issues? ...

**Michelle Russell:** We would refer matters ourselves. If it is an equalities issue, we will advise the complainant to report it there.

**Chair:** The ones you mentioned were exactly that.

**Michelle Russell:** It is not as simple as that. What tends to happen is that a package of things comes up, of which that is one element. If one element relates to equality issues, we will raise it, and we have had engagement with the Equality and Human Rights Commission. There are other issues: for example, a leaflet was handed out that said, in effect, that every Muslim should be a terrorist. ...

In that particular case, the student union itself had already dealt with it and distanced itself because it was unhappy.

**Chair:** Why did they not call the police? Should it not be the police who deal with that rather than you?

**Michelle Russell:** I am sure they did that, and we would advise them to. ...

**Q62 Karen Buck (Labour):** As far as the issues that are identified—terrorism, extremism, religious or racial hatred—you are saying that in respect of university students' unions, there have not been any instances where you have had to intervene.

**Michelle Russell:** From a charity law perspective, have we had to say that something was in breach or should not have been held? No. ...

**Karen Buck:** In the cases that you have dealt with, have you seen an upward trend, is it fairly consistent or has it changed in any way over time?

**Michelle Russell:** Apart from one exception which I will flag, I would not say that there has been any increase. ... The only exception to that is a particular issue recently in relation to the BDS Motion which has been affecting a number of student unions. We have been trying to engage on that.

**Baroness Prosser (Labour):** Can you explain what that is?

**Aarti Thakor:** It is the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement. It is effectively about boycotting Israeli products and there have been Motions in that area. ...

**Q63 Joanna Cherry (SNP):** We have had some evidence from members of the student union at SOAS stating that the Charity Commission has questioned them five times in a single year. They also sent us a copy of a letter which the Charity Commission sent to the union. ...

**Q64 Joanna Cherry:** ... It says, "Previously, the Commission was concerned about the Charity's processes for events that had been organised by the Charity's affiliated societies, in particular the Friends of Palestine Society and the Islamic Society. So that the Commission can assess the current position with regard to both societies, please now provide a list of all speakers and events that have been organised by both societies since the start of the 2017/18 academic year to 1 November 2017. With regard to the same two societies, please also submit for review, the associated room booking forms, risk assessments forms and any other documents of relevance (for example, due diligence checks, mitigation processes, complaints etc.) for each of the speaker/events organised in the time period provided".

At first blush, that seems like quite an onerous requirement. Is it common for institutions to be monitored as closely as this? Is there a particular problem with SOAS, or is it common for you to make requests of students' unions to produce this kind of information over the period of a whole academic year for a number of different societies?

**Michelle Russell:** ... no, it is not common. There were particular complaints about SOAS, including that it did not follow the procedures that it has for how it deals with speakers. ...

... the type of situation in which we would engage and have discussions would be where jihad was being advocated or Zionist or anti-Semitic comments were being made. It is in that acute area where the debate potentially either veers into something that interferes with the human rights of other groups, and where we might have complaints—

**Joanna Cherry:** Advocating jihad or anti-Semitism are already covered by other laws: laws against incitement to hatred and laws against inciting violence.

**Aarti Thakor:** One difficulty is that, in a lot of these contexts, unless there is a transcript, it is very much dependent on the nature of the complaints received and information after the event. So often it is very difficult for us, as well as for other regulators, to make any determination about whether there have in fact been anti-Semitic, extremist or even controversial comments.

We become involved where there is clearly a risk of that or the risk of a perception of that, which goes back to the charity trustees' obligation to preserve the good name of the charity. ...

**Joanna Cherry:** But if you have an allegation that someone made a racist or anti-Semitic statement, or incited violence, why not just say that, rather than "controversial"?

**Aarti Thakor:** Sometimes we might simply not have the evidence to say that with great specificity. ...

**Chair:** I have a problem. On the one hand, if it is controversial, it is controversial but it is really none of your business, because controversy is not illegal. For jihad and incitement to terrorism, I would hope that it would be the police who would be involved. I would not like to think that it was left to you to deal with that. For racial hatred and discrimination, it would be the Equality and Human Rights Commission. ...

The question is why you, rather than the Equality and Human Rights Commission or the police, are judging what is or is not racist, or what is or is not a criminal offence. ...

**Alex Burghart (Conservative):** I can see that if somebody is going around inciting people to jihad or saying that, for whatever reason, people should be murdered in their beds, of course the universities or anybody should cease to give them a platform. But some people say things that are controversial and make some others feel uncomfortable, but they are within the bounds of the law. This is freedom of speech. Universities as seats of freedom of speech should be perfectly entitled to put such people on a platform.

**Aarti Thakor:** We accept that absolutely ... But, as Michelle suggested, it very much depends on the complaints we have received in that context and how the statements have been taken by a member of the student union who attended at the time. The complaints we get tend not to suggest mere discomfort. They are more active: "I do not want to attend" or "I feel unsafe in this particular context". That is why we would assess it against our risk framework and decide whether there was something for us to check after the event to make sure that the trustees had thought about it with the due consideration that it deserved. ...

Q66 **Alex Burghart:** What will you do if you find a students' union that you see as clamping down on or restricting freedom of speech? What do you do next?

**Michael Barber (Chair, Office for Students):** You are talking about students' unions as opposed to universities. ... The Office for Students has no powers over students' unions—and nor do we want them.

**Alex Burghart:** So you would refer the students' union to its university, and you would expect the university to follow its own procedures and take over the issue.

**Sir Michael Barber:** If it was a major inhibition of freedom of speech that came up in a students' union, we would ask questions of the university. ...

**Alex Burghart:** ... From what you have just said, what sort of behaviour might lead to deregistration of a university or institution?

**Sir Michael Barber:** ... it would have to be a flagrant breach of the idea of freedom of speech on campuses. It might be where there is no code of practice, or where there is a code of practice that is really clear and made public but which is not adhered to at all. It might be where some particular view that is within the law is hounded off a university. Even then, we would want to try to resolve it without using the powers, if we possibly could. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/human-rights-committee/freedom-of-speech-in-universities/oral/77559.html>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Jim Shannon (DUP) (854) Importance of prayer** – That this House welcomes the new research by the Tear Fund, which shows that adults in the UK are praying more; encourages people to recognise that prayer can help to restore strength, enables people to be closer to God and focuses their heart and mind; and believes that prayer can, and does, change things.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2017-19/854>

## Home Office

### **Sara Khan to lead Commission for Countering Extremism**

... Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, said: The Commission for Countering Extremism will form a crucial part of this government's work to stop the scourge of extremism in all its forms and Sara Khan is expertly qualified to lead its important work.

She will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Commission which will prove vital as it works to identify and challenge extremism and provide independent advice to the government.

Last century we challenged racism by uniting civil society and the state. We have the same ambition to confront extremism. This government will not stand by and allow the menace of extremism to undermine the fundamental, pluralistic values which underpin our society.

The Commission has a clear remit to support the government, the public sector, and civil and wider society to identify and challenge all forms of extremism. It will:

- provide the government with impartial, external advice on the tools, policies and approaches needed to tackle extremism
- support the public sector, communities and civil society to confront extremism wherever it exists
- promote fundamental, pluralistic British values

Initially, the Commission will widely and openly enter a discussion about extremism and Britain's values with individuals from all areas of society, independently selecting who it will engage with.

It will also produce a strategic assessment of the threat extremism presents as well as the current response and in this initial phase will also advise on the Commission's future structures and work programmes. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sara-khan-to-lead-commission-for-countering-extremism>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-10103 Jackson Carlaw (Conservative): Chelsea FC Challenges Anti-Semitism** – That the Parliament notes Chelsea FC's new initiative against the scourge of anti-Semitism; understands that the long-term initiative will officially launch on 31 January 2018 as part of the team's inclusion work through the Chelsea Foundation's campaign, Building Bridges; welcomes that the news that it will be working with valued organisations, such as the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Community Security Trust, and considers that such positive action from football clubs can do much to educate people about and prevent the bigotry of anti-Semitism.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10103>

## Northern Ireland Executive

### **Minority Ethnic Development Fund 2018/19**

*Closing date for applications: 1 March 2018*

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/minority-ethnic-development-fund-201819>

TOP

# Holocaust

## House of Commons Oral Answers

### Prime Minister's Questions

*col 255* **The Prime Minister (Theresa May):** I am sure that Members throughout the House will wish to join me in marking Holocaust Memorial Day this Saturday and in remembering all those who endured such appalling suffering in the holocaust. ...

**Jeremy Corbyn (Labour):** I join the Prime Minister in commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day. Many Members will be signing the book of remembrance and attending the event tomorrow. We have to teach all generations that the descent into Nazism and the holocaust must never, ever be repeated anywhere on this planet. ...

*col 258* **Ian Blackford (SNP):** ... May I associate myself with the remarks of the Prime Minister about Holocaust Memorial Day? We should never forget the horrible tragedies and the price that people had to pay. However, we should also remember the genocide that has happened in many territories since that time as well, and we all must work to eradicate that scourge from our society. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-24/debates/156B95FC-2467-42BD-BFD5-464656276D9C/Engagements>

### Christians: Middle East

**Matthew Offord (Conservative):** Yesterday, I had a not only interesting but humbling experience when I visited the Holocaust Survivors Centre in my constituency. Many of the people there were actually survivors of the holocaust—the Shoah. Does my right hon. Friend accept that those people are not only concerned about attacks in other countries on the basis of religion, but feel that we need to do more to help the Egyptian Government to prevent such attacks, which are, effectively, a form of genocide?

**Caroline Spelman:** The proximity of Holocaust Memorial Day reminds all of us that, sadly, such atrocities are ongoing in our world, and that people are persecuted for their faith. Egypt was relatively quiet over Christmas—quieter than in recent months—but it is the ancient Coptic Church in that country for which we, as fellow Christians, fear. It is a fact that Egypt has moved from 21st to 17th on the world watch list of countries about which we should be concerned, not least because of the rise of Daesh there.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-25/debates/EB5E9E9D-E846-4B98-AA76-B151E0C98124/ChristiansMiddleEast#contribution-09EB63C3-9868-42CD-91B8-B3EB1237EA3D>

### Business of the House

*col 409* **The Leader of the House of Commons (Andrea Leadsom):** ... We all remember those who suffered such terrible atrocities during the holocaust as we mark Holocaust Memorial Day this weekend, and I think we are all united in our desire to eradicate such evil acts from our world. ...

*col 411* **Valerie Vaz (Labour):** ... Yesterday, we also had a debate on human rights, in this, the week of Holocaust Memorial Day ... The Leader of the Opposition reminded us all to sign the book of commitment ... That is a reminder that every one of the rights in the European convention on human rights, which was enacted in UK law under the Human Rights Act 1998, was systematically violated in the second world war. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-25/debates/5A9BFBCA-E126-47E1-9802-0BC93CA2906E/BusinessOfTheHouse>

## House of Commons Written Answers

### World War II: Anniversaries

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123007] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will take steps to commemorate (a) Holocaust Memorial Day 2018, (b) the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau by allied forces and (c) the role played by British forces in defeating the Nazi regime; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:** The Ministry of Defence will be marking this year's Holocaust Memorial Day in the Department's London Headquarters Memorial Courtyard on Wednesday 24 January. The event is part of a cross-Government commemoration involving 18 Departments and has been organised in conjunction with the Holocaust Educational Trust. This will be an opportunity to hear the personal testimony of a Holocaust survivor and consider Defence's contribution to the liberation of the concentration camps. It will also be a chance to reflect on the enduring relevance of the Holocaust to today's world.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123007/>

### World War II: Anniversaries

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123008] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will take steps to commemorate the role of British soldiers in liberating Bergen-Belson in World War Two.

**Mark Lancaster:** The brave British and Canadian liberation of Bergen-Belsen on 15 April 1945 marked the end of suffering for thousands of men, women and children. Whilst the Ministry of Defence has no plans to hold a dedicated commemorative event, the Department will support events where possible.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123008/>

### Holocaust Memorial Day

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123010] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if his Department will support local authorities to hold memorial events for Holocaust Memorial Day 2018.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Department funds the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust which provides resources to local authorities to support local Holocaust Memorial Day events. In 2017 there were 7,700 local Holocaust Memorial Day events across the country many of them were hosted by local authorities. We are expecting the same this year but will not have the total numbers until after Holocaust Memorial Day.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123010/>

### Holocaust Memorial Day

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123013] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has plans to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day 2018.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Department hosted in partnership with the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, a Holocaust Memorial Day event on Wednesday 17 January for staff. We were honoured to hear the testimony of Holocaust survivor Janine Webber and two Holocaust Educational Trust Ambassadors Jack Pepper from the Glyn School and Chloe Smith from Furze Platt Senior School.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123013/>

## Holocaust Memorial Day

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123057] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to commemorate the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government funds the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust to deliver the annual Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz –Birkenau on behalf of the nation. This year the ceremony will take place on 25 January 2018.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123057/>

## Holocaust Educational Trust

*The following four questions all received the same answer*

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123063] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support the outreach work of the Holocaust Educational Trust.

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123065] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps her Department has taken to support the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons From Auschwitz project.

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123077] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to continue to support the Holocaust Educational Trust.

### Department for Education: Holocaust Memorial Day

**Ian Paisley (DUP)** [123072] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day 2018.

**Nick Gibb:** Since 2010, the Department for Education has provided over £14 million to support students and teachers from state-funded schools and colleges in England to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau, through the Lessons from Auschwitz programme. The aim of these visits is to increase knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust.

We are continuing to support the Holocaust Education Trust, ensuring more students have the opportunity to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau and that they share the knowledge they have gained from their visit and lead projects to increase awareness of the Holocaust in their schools and local communities.

The Department also funds the University College London centre for Holocaust Education to provide continuing professional development for teachers. On 16 January 2018, the Government announced a partnership between the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Education. These departments are providing £144,261 of joint funding for a new programme to support universities in tackling antisemitism on campus. The programme will be delivered by the Holocaust Educational Trust and will involve 200 students and university leaders from across the country visiting the former Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Upon their return, they will take part in a seminar, which will deal explicitly with campus issues and how to identify and tackle antisemitism.

Every year the Department for Education holds a Holocaust Memorial Day event. This year it will fall on 31 January 2018 and be hosted by The Holocaust Educational Trust. A Holocaust survivor will attend as guest speaker, with their testimony being the central focus of the event; and young ambassadors will share their reflections on their Department for Education funded 'Lessons from Auschwitz' experience.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123063/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123065/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123077/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123072/>

### **World War II: Genocide**

**Joan Ryan (Labour)** [123410] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to support UCL's Holocaust Education Programme's Beacon Schools Project.

**Nick Gibb:** The Government has provided £3.75 million of funding to University College London Institute of Education's Centre for Holocaust Education (CfHE) since 2008, and we have recently confirmed that we will continue to fund the programme until 2020. The aim of the programme, which is jointly funded by the Pears Foundation, is to help ensure that teachers are equipped with the training and resources they need to deliver effective Holocaust education. Some of this funding is used to support the CfHE's Beacon Schools project.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123410/>

## **Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

**We must never forget diplomats who rescued Jews from Nazis: article [in the Evening Standard] by Boris Johnson**

... As we approach Holocaust Memorial Day tomorrow, I've been paying tribute to British diplomats who voiced outrage over the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany — and acted on their words. After the Kristallnacht pogrom cast Jews onto the streets in November 1938, our Charge d'Affaires in Berlin, Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, sent the following telegram to London.

"I can find no words strong enough in condemnation of the disgusting treatment of so many innocent people," he wrote. "The civilised world is faced with the appalling sight of 500,000 people about to rot away in starvation."

Ogilvie-Forbes let his embassy passport officer bend the rules and issue travel documents to thousands of Jews, allowing them to escape Germany. Margaret Reid was one official who processed the permits.

Earlier, our Consul-General in Munich, John Carvell, secured the freedom of 300 Jews from Dachau in 1937. His counterpart in Lithuania, Sir Thomas Preston, helped hundreds of Jews escape to Sweden in 1940. This week, [their descendants came to the Foreign Office](#) to receive Hero of the Holocaust Medals, granting their forebears posthumous recognition. ...

In truth, too few people in that era strained every nerve and sinew to help the Jews. It was left to individual diplomats of great moral courage to do what was possible, sometimes in breach of the rules.

As Holocaust Memorial Day approaches, we would be committing a grave error if we dared overlook its message. The bigotry and hatred that paved the way for the Holocaust has never wholly disappeared. You can find it today on the internet and sometimes in our public discourse. ...

Even today, the truth about the Holocaust is sometimes denied. Comparisons are drawn between Zionism and Nazism, including by people who should know better. Hence the importance of the commemoration this weekend; the tragedy is that it remains necessary.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/we-must-never-forget-diplomats-who-rescued-jews-from-nazis-article-by-boris-johnson>

## Office of the Secretary of State for Wales

### **Alun Cairns: “The importance of saying no to hatred and prejudice”**

... Alun Cairns said: The power of words cannot be underestimated. They can entertain us, educate us, unite us, and uplift us. But, also, how they can wound and divide us - and even drive some towards hatred and violence.

Every year we hear the words of genocide survivors, sharing their most harrowing memories so that we can understand the importance of saying no to prejudice.

In a fragile world, it is more important than ever that we listen to those words and to educate the next generation about the dangers of hatred.

This part of our shared history must be remembered and commemorated. On Holocaust Memorial Day, we must all take the opportunity to reflect upon the ways in which we live our lives and look at how we can create better, stronger communities together so that the events of our past are never repeated again. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/alun-cairns-the-importance-of-saying-no-to-hatred-and-prejudice>

## Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

### **Holocaust Educational Trust**

**6. Adam Tomkins (Conservative):** To ask the Scottish Government what support it is giving to the Holocaust Educational Trust. (S5O-01699)

**The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (John Swinney):** We must never forget the Holocaust and the people who continue to suffer because of genocide and intolerance, racism and bigotry.

Since 2009, the Scottish Government has provided the Holocaust Education Trust with funding for the lessons from Auschwitz project. The funding began in 2009 with £214,000 per year and has since risen to £296,000 per year in 2017-18. That is a total of £2.25 million over the period. That illustrates the Government's commitment to providing opportunities for Scotland's young people to develop as responsible citizens, which is a key element of our curriculum. To date, the project has reached more than 68 per cent of Scotland's schools, with 3,200 Scottish students having participated in it along with more than 500 teachers.

**Adam Tomkins:** The Holocaust Educational Trust plays a leading role in promoting Holocaust memorial day, which is on Saturday and on which Bill Kidd has a question in First Minister's questions in a few moments. Holocaust memorial day falls on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, which the Deputy First Minister visited with Scottish schoolchildren recently.

It was my honour to open our Parliament's annual Holocaust memorial day debate earlier this month, which this year focused on the theme of the power of words. Will the Scottish Government stand with me and with every member of this Parliament who spoke in that debate in pledging to remember the unique horror of the Holocaust and thanking the Holocaust Educational Trust for its invaluable work in ensuring that we will never forget?

**John Swinney:** I agree unreservedly with the remarks that Mr Tomkins made in his question. The events of the Holocaust must be forgotten by nobody, and as we look at the troubled and uncertain world in which we live today, there is even more requirement for people to be reminded of the horror of the Holocaust.

As Mr Tomkins said, I accompanied Scottish school pupils to Auschwitz-Birkenau in November. Despite my having extensively studied that period of modern history, nothing prepared me for what I witnessed. The experience for our young people, of whom I was enormously proud—they were much younger than me but were able to handle with great dignity, care and understanding the events of that

trip—indicated to me that the investment that we make in the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust is vital to ensuring that we sustain among our young people that understanding and their appreciation of those terrible events.

The First Minister represented the Government at a Holocaust memorial day event last night in the city of Glasgow, which was run by our schools and was another fine tribute to the excellence that exists within Scottish education, and to the deep understanding of the significance and horror of the events that Mr Tomkins raises in Parliament today.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11325&i=103051#ScotParlOR>

### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

**7. Bill Kidd (SNP):** To ask the First Minister how the Scottish Government is marking Holocaust memorial day. (S5F-01972)

**The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon):** We must never forget the horrors of the Holocaust and other genocides around the world, which are a stark reminder of the inhumanity and violence that bigotry and intolerance can wreak if left unchallenged. Last night, I was honoured to speak at this year's national event to mark international Holocaust memorial day, which took place at Glasgow Caledonian University. I commend Interfaith Scotland and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for their excellent work in organising that event. I know that members across the chamber will be marking the day in different ways. We must continue to stand shoulder to shoulder in challenging hatred and promoting a world where everyone lives with fundamental human dignity.

**Bill Kidd:** I thank the First Minister for that answer and acknowledge the support that the Scottish Government gives to the Holocaust Educational Trust. I will also thank, if he does not mind my doing so, the Presiding Officer for his support of the Holocaust Educational Trust in Parliament this week.

I stated earlier that the Deputy First Minister was deeply affected by his recent visit to Auschwitz with 200 Scottish school pupils. Colleagues from across the chamber have been moved by their visits to Srebrenica and to other sites of genocide and persecution across the world. Such terrible atrocities remind us of man's inhumanity to man, but those who have been lost to us will never be forgotten. Will the Government continue to support projects in our schools that give Scotland's young people the chance to remember, learn and play their part in consigning intolerance and genocide to the history books forever?

**The First Minister:** As the Deputy First Minister said just before First Minister's questions, the role of education is vital and can never be overstated. Last night, I listened again to a very impressive young woman who was part of the programme of schools visits to Auschwitz. I have heard the testimony of many of those young people who have visited and it never fails to have an impact and to move me deeply.

I have not yet had an opportunity to visit Auschwitz—the Deputy First Minister visited recently—but I hope to do so in the future. Around 18 months ago, I took the opportunity to visit Srebrenica. I knew a lot about the Bosnian genocide in theory, but it was not until I visited the site and the memorial and talked to people who had been affected—some of the bereaved and survivors—that I felt the true impact. I know that other members have had similar experiences. It will live with me for the rest of my life.

With every year that passes, since the second world war in particular, it becomes more important that remembrance continues: we must ensure that the next generation never forgets. That is why Holocaust memorial day and all the events around it are so important. This year's theme is the power of words. We have been reminded today that we can all learn lessons about that. Words have great power, so we should all be careful how we choose them.

At the very end of today's First Minister's questions, notwithstanding all the many things that divide us as a Parliament, a country and a society, we should come together to remember the power of our common humanity. This is Holocaust memorial week, but today is also the day on which we celebrate the birthday of our national bard. It is appropriate that those things are in such close proximity, because in many ways, Robert Burns personified that humanity in saying:  
"That Man to Man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that."

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11325&i=103064#ScotParlOR>

## Scottish Government

### Holocaust Memorial Day

... The First Minister said: International Holocaust Memorial Day is an opportunity for us to reflect upon the past and make clear Scotland's commitment to building a society based on mutual trust, respect and understanding.

Seventy three years on from the liberation of Auschwitz, we must never forget the people who suffered and died under the Holocaust – and those who continue to face intolerance and hatred around the world today. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://firstminister.gov.scot/holocaust-memorial-day-2/>

## Welsh Assembly

### 90 second statements

*col 257* **Julie Morgan (Labour):** The Gypsy and Traveller Holocaust event—the cross-party group on Gypsies and Travellers began organising an annual event three years ago to mark Holocaust Memorial Day because of the lack of knowledge of the suffering of the Gypsies in the Holocaust. Although the event tomorrow has been organised by Gypsies and Travellers, we will also be remembering the Jewish people, disabled people, the gay people who suffered; we will be remembering everybody.

Roma were targeted by the Nazis across Europe in the same way the Jewish population was, and the aim was to destroy the population entirely. Systematic programmes for moving the Roma into camps or segregated areas existed in every country under Nazi occupation and hundreds of thousands of European Roma were murdered. It is estimated that, at the beginning of world war two, there were around 1 million Roma in Europe. By the end of the war, there were only about 20 to 30 per cent of that. After the genocide, Roma survivors of the camps were not immediately acknowledged; they weren't compensated or asked to testify at the Nuremberg trials. It took more than 30 years for the West German Government to admit that the Nazis had targeted the Roma population.

A great many people who survived the Holocaust were left with terrible scars—scars that for many people have never healed. We will remember all of them too. Last year, the event used visual art to help us remember, with a tree and the book sculpture to represent the resilience of survivors and the will of the people to go on. This year, the artwork for the event is the 'Wall of Words'. ...

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4899#C54371>

## Welsh Government

### **First Minister remembers victims of Holocaust at service**

... First Minister Carwyn Jones said: "I am proud to stand alongside the rest of the world to honour those who faced the most horrendous atrocities ever known.

Today is an important opportunity to reflect on the way we live our lives today and challenge hatred and persecution that sadly still exists. It is our duty to keep the memory of those who died alive, and ensure such atrocities are never repeated again."

Leader of Cardiff Council, Cllr Huw Thomas, said: "Cardiff has a proud tradition as a welcoming city, a city open to people of all faiths and races. It's important we remember those that died at the hands of the Nazis in the Holocaust and of course the other genocides which have happened across the world. Today we have a shared responsibility as human beings to fight these evils and to do what we can to stop them ever happening again." ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://gov.wales/newsroom/firstminister/2018/180129-First-Minister-remembers-victims-of-Holocaust-at-service/?lang=en>

## Northern Ireland Executive

### **The Holocaust reminds us of the power of words**

A Holocaust memorial event was held ... to mark 73 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in Poland. ...

Speaking at the event, the Head of the Civil Service, David Sterling said: "Holocaust Memorial Day reminds us that we must reflect on the terrible consequences of discrimination and persecution.

"The theme for this year's commemoration is the power of words. Words can have a huge impact, whether for the good or bad. If we are to help build our shared and diverse society, we must ensure that words should never be tolerated to marginalise, inflict pain and hurt against anyone regardless of race, colour, religion, creed, nationality, sexual orientation, or disability. We must learn from the past if we are to build a better future.

"We must also remember the words and testimonies of those who suffered Nazi persecution and that of subsequent genocides. It is vital that their voices continue to be heard to ensure we do not forget the dreadful consequences of propaganda used to incite hatred."

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said: "This year, hundreds of thousands of people across the UK will be marking Holocaust Memorial Day and exploring the theme the power of words.

"During the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and the genocides which have taken place since in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, words have been used to divide communities and incite hatred. However, words have also been used for good: to resist persecution, to witness wrongdoing and to heal after genocide. At the Northern Ireland Ceremony and across the UK, we know that people will be choosing to use their words for good today and to learn lessons from the past, to create a safer, better future.

"Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is pleased to be working once again with The Executive Office in Northern Ireland to help support Holocaust Memorial Day 2018." ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/holocaust-reminds-us-power-words>

## European Commission

### **Message by President Jean-Claude Juncker on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2018**

The 27<sup>th</sup> of January is a date marked in history by sorrow and grief. On this day 73 years ago, Allied Forces liberated the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau and brought the horrors perpetrated there to an end. To mark this event, we honour today the memories of the six million Jews and other victims who perished during the Holocaust. We also pay tribute to those who survived the Shoah, among them the first President of the European Parliament Simone Veil, who dedicated her life to reconciliation and who has sadly passed away this past year.

2018 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 'Reichspogromnacht' (Night of the Broken Glass) and the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of racist laws in Fascist Italy. But 2018 also represents the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which grew out of the horrors of the Holocaust.

This day should remind us to be vigilant in the face of hatred, discrimination and dehumanisation. It is a day to confront those who spread lies about our history and who question the Holocaust or negate its fundamental meaning for today's Europe. As Simone Veil reminded us, it is necessary to recall the names and stories of those we have lost, to spare them from disappearing for a second time.

This is a day to firmly condemn hatred, bigotry and Antisemitism in all its forms. We need to build a strong society that stands up for what is right. We need people to speak up and act when they see racist acts in public or when they hear antisemitic slogans on European streets as we have witnessed recently.

As the number of remaining Holocaust survivors decreases, we have a moral responsibility to ensure that their story remains part of Europe's collective memory, also for the young generations. The Commission will therefore strengthen our cooperation with international organisations working on Holocaust Remembrance, as also requested by the European Parliament. Holocaust education remains central to building up resilience against all forms of hatred in our European societies, and the European Parliament has provided a useful definition of Antisemitism for better education and training.

Antisemitism is not only a threat for Jews but a fundamental menace to our open and liberal societies. Remembering the atrocities of the Holocaust, this darkest chapter of modern European history, is essential for understanding the value of having a European Union today. It is to prevent these horrors that we founded a Union based on universal human rights, democracy, the rule of law and non-discrimination, and it is in the name of those values that we need to preserve it and constantly improve it.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-18-393\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-18-393_en.htm)

### **The International Holocaust Remembrance Day**

To mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the EC Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs and the Europe for Citizens Programme organised on 24 January a special event. It also launched the opening of the exhibition "Between Life and Death. Stories of Rescue During the Holocaust". ...

The event was introduced by Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, who said: "The Holocaust shattered the entire moral fibre of human society and had a devastating effect on the lives of individuals, families and communities. We remember the six million men, women and children whose lives were cut short when the hatred and the misguided politics of racial superiority engulfed our continent. Looking at the past, we find inspiration in the people who are here today to bear the witness and in all those who decided against all odds to provide help and rescue risking their own life. Out of those unspeakable atrocities, and out of total destruction, a new social and moral tissue was born in Europe. This is our legacy. Today, we make a

pledge as we do every day and every year, that we shall never forget. That we shall continue to fight to create fair, decent and compassionate societies which are not indifferent in the face of human misery. We make a pledge to continue deconstructing the seeds of anti-Semitic narratives and attitudes. We make a pledge to uphold notions of humanity and solidarity, to live up to our aspirations of an open Europe. We make a pledge of building a Europe of values, a strong Europe of responsible citizens and a Europe which learned from its past to not repeat it again." ...

**To read the full press release see**

[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/international-holocaust-remembrance-day\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/international-holocaust-remembrance-day_en)

## Council of Europe

### **Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity: Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, Anders Samuelsen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark**

On 27 January 1945, the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau – where more than one million people had been sent to gas chambers to perish during the Holocaust – was liberated.

We mark this “Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity” to honour the memory of the victims of the atrocities of the Holocaust and to recall that we must remain as determined and vigilant as ever with regard to the dangers of the phenomena of racism, intolerance and hatred.

This commemoration gives us an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to pursuing, relentlessly, our efforts to build a world based on the democratic values and human rights, which unite us within the Council of Europe.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/day-of-remembrance-of-the-holocaust-and-for-the-prevention-of-crimes-against-humani-1>

### **Ceremony to mark International Day of Holocaust Commemoration**

Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland and Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen led tributes to the memory of Holocaust victims, at a ceremony outside the main Council of Europe building in Strasbourg.

Other participants who made addresses and laid wreaths in front of the commemorative stone included :

- Carmel Shama-Hacohen, Ambassador of Israel to the international institutions in France
- Miranda Vuolasranta, President of the European Roma and Travellers Forum,
- Denis Erhart, President of "Les Oublié(e)s" de la Mémoire Association Civile Homosexuelle du Devoir de Mémoire
- Michele Nicoletti, President of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Commemoration ceremonies and Remembrance events to mark the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust will also take place in several member states with the support of the Council of Europe field offices.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/ceremony-to-mark-international-day-of-holocaust-commemoration>

### **Speech by Michele Nicoletti [President, Council of Europe] at Ceremony to mark the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the Victims of the Holocaust**

As I pay tribute to the victims of the Holocaust, I first of all recall the memories of those who survived it.

I recall the words of one of my compatriots – Primo Levi – who was the first to make a detailed written recollection of the horrors and atrocities that happened in Auschwitz.

His famous book "If this is a man" starts with a poem which I would like to quote  
You who live safe  
In your warm houses,  
You who find warm food  
And friendly faces when you return home.  
Consider if this is a man  
Who works in mud,  
Who knows no peace,  
Who fights for a crust of bread,  
Who dies by a yes or no.

Let us think about these words as we end this ceremony.

They remind us that the Holocaust is not just a dark page of our history. The Holocaust gives us an example – the ugliest, most appalling and disgraceful – and yet a REAL example of what happens when human kind loses sight of the fundamental values of humanity.

My country – Italy – is about to mark the sombre anniversary of the adoption of the so-called "Racial Laws". On this occasion, the President of Italy nominated Liliana Segre, an Italian Holocaust survivor, Senator for life. It therefore gives me a special honour to speak today on behalf of the Members of Parliamentary Assembly as well as on behalf the members of the Italian Parliament, including Liliana Segre.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of Europe's mission is to uphold the values of human dignity and fundamental rights in order to protect the society we live in against intolerance and hate, as well as any form of discrimination that may divide us.

Every one of us must spare no effort to ensure that, in our Common European Home, NEVER AGAIN may the darkest pages of our common history be repeated.

<https://tinyurl.com/ydya4kof>

## European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

### **Learning from the Holocaust to address today's refugee situation**

... The Holocaust and World War 2 created millions of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people. Many sought refuge, escaping war and persecution. Many were skilled professionals and many were children. There are parallels to the situation today where the number of displaced people has again reached the same levels; currently it stands at over 65 million people worldwide.

The policy of antisemitism and targeting other victims by the Nazi regime led to increasing numbers of refugees in Europe fleeing to find sanctuary elsewhere. Then, as can be seen in some places today, there was reluctance on the part of governments to find solutions. ...

Back then, a culture of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping and fear of refugees developed, fueled by an economic crisis and populist rhetoric by those in power. Shades of this can be found today underlining the perils of racism, hate and indifference.

Learning from the Holocaust gives us the benefit of hindsight to be in a better place to help refugees today. It points to the importance of promoting and safeguarding human rights, such as equality and the protection of minorities. It shows what was done in the past to help refugees such as the 'Kindertransport' initiative that brought thousands of unaccompanied children to the UK. It also humanises the plight of refugees escaping tyranny. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2018/learning-holocaust-address-todays-refugee-situation>

## Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

### **Ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, OSCE officials call for increased commemoration efforts, as part of commitment to addressing anti-Semitism and all forms of intolerance**

... "Saturday's commemoration is a significant reminder of the murder of six million Jews - an attempt to extinguish a people and its culture. We call on all OSCE participating States to commemorate the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp and to ensure that the memories of all the victims of the Holocaust remain in the public conscience," said the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Italy's Foreign Minister Angelino Alfano. "Tragically, anti-Semitism has not been consigned to history but continues to affect Jewish communities across the OSCE region. It is our duty to make certain that this, and every form of intolerance is met with a powerful response." ...

"As anti-Semitism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination continue to present serious challenges, this commemoration serves as a strong reminder of the importance of collectively standing against all manifestations of hate and intolerance," said Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). "Education plays a crucial role in grounding our societies on a secure basis of tolerance and making all of us understand that, in light of history, we must remain vigilant in promoting and respecting human rights. Enhancing Holocaust commemoration and education activities across the OSCE region sends a strong signal that no form of discrimination will be tolerated."

Today also saw the publication by ODIHR of *Holocaust Memorial Days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region*, which provides an overview of remembrance and education practices in participating States regarding the Holocaust, the Roma and Sinti genocide, and all other victims of National Socialist persecution. The publication also shares best practices in the study and commemoration of the Holocaust. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.osce.org/odihr/368191>

### **Holocaust Memorial Days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region**

<http://www.osce.org/odihr/hmd2018?download=true>

## United Nations

### **'We are all at risk' when humanity's values are abandoned; UN honours memory of Holocaust victims**

Calling on the world to "stand together against the normalization of hate, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has stressed in his message for the International Day dedicated to honouring Holocaust victims that everyone has a responsibility to quickly and decisively resist racism and violence.

Mr. Guterres recalled that the [International Day](#), marked annually on 27 January, was created to honour the memory of six million Jewish men, women and children that [perished in the Holocaust](#) and countless others lost their lives as cruelty convulsed the world.

Yet, decades since the Second World War, there is still the persistence of anti-Semitism and an increase in other forms of prejudice.

Citing Neo-Nazis and white supremacy groups as among the main purveyors of extreme hatred, the UN chief said that too often, vile views are moving from the margins to the mainstream of societies and politics.

"Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we are all at risk," stressed

the Secretary-General.

“All of us have a responsibility to quickly, clearly and decisively resist racism and violence,” he stated, adding: “Through education and understanding, we can build a future of dignity, human rights and peaceful coexistence for all.”

For his part, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein held the painful day of remembrance for Holocaust the victims as forcing us “to contemplate the horrors to which bigotry, racism and ultimately lead.”

“The sadistic brutality of the atrocities inflicted by the Nazi regime on Jews, Roma, Slavs, disabled people, political dissidents, homosexuals and others was nourished by layer upon layer of propaganda, falsifications and incitement to hatred,” he stated, adding how they were denigrated and smeared, “one after another, their rights were refused, and finally, even their humanity was denied.”

Mr. Zeid pointed to the statement of Primo Levi, who survived the Auschwitz Birkenau concentration camp: “It happened, therefore it can happen again.”

“As we honour the victims of the Holocaust,” Mr. Zeid continued, “we must also acknowledge the need to [prevent the recurrence of anti-Semitism](#) and all forms of racial and religious hatred and discrimination today.” ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58488#.Wm4nl5P1WnY>

## Church of Scotland

### **Jane Haining: Scot who died at Auschwitz honoured in new heritage centre**

The memory of a Scot who gave her life to help protect Jewish schoolgirls during the Second World War will be kept “alive” in a new heritage centre officially opening today.

Jane Haining’s story of heroism, bravery and personal sacrifice is being celebrated at Dunscore Church in Dumfries and Galloway. ...

Miss Haining’s niece, Deirdre McDowell, will unveil a Historic Environment Scotland plaque in memory of the missionary, who worked at the Scottish Mission School in Budapest, Hungary during the 1930s and 40s.

She refused to return home after war broke out, despite advice from church officials, saying the children needed her in the “days of darkness”. ...

The Christian martyr was posthumously honoured by the UK Government for “preserving life in the face of persecution” and is the only Scot to be officially recognised at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel. ...

Rev Iain Cunningham, convener of the Church of Scotland’s World Mission Council, said: “This year’s theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is the power of words – words that can make a difference both for good and evil.

“So it is fitting that at this time we remember the poignant words of Jane Haining.

“When instructed by the Church to return home for her own safety, she wrote back ‘if these children need me in days of sunshine, how much more do they need me in days of darkness?’

“Jane’s words live on like a light shining in the dark places of today’s world.” ...

**To read the full press release see**

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/news/2018/jane\\_haining\\_scot\\_who\\_died\\_at\\_auschwitz\\_honoured\\_in\\_new\\_heritage\\_centre](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/2018/jane_haining_scot_who_died_at_auschwitz_honoured_in_new_heritage_centre)

TOP

## House of Commons Debate

### Proscription of Hezbollah

*col 478* **Mike Gapes (Labour Co-op):** ... Does my right hon. Friend agree that terrorist activities should not be the only grounds for prosecution, and that there should be prosecutions for incitement to hatred, incitement to anti-Semitism and other crimes that are being committed on the streets of London? ...

**Joan Ryan:** ... Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation, driven by anti-Semitic ideology, which seeks the destruction of Israel. It has wreaked death and destruction throughout the middle east, aiding and abetting the Assad regime's butchery in Syria and helping to drive Iran's expansionism throughout the region. It makes no distinction between its political and military wings, and nor should the British Government. ...

Over the past three decades, it has been implicated in a string of deadly attacks against Israeli, Jewish and western targets in the middle east and far beyond. ...

*col 479* **Zac Goldsmith (Conservative):** ... Does she agree that the 1,000 or so people who marched in London under the Hezbollah flag subscribe to the very agenda that she has described? There is no difference between the military and political wings of Hezbollah, as it continually acknowledges. The only recognition of a difference is in UK policy; it does not exist in reality. ...

**Joan Ryan:** ... Hezbollah's actions are driven by a deep-seated, intractable and vicious hatred of Jews. The House does not need to take my word for it; Hezbollah's leaders have proudly boasted of their anti-Semitism: "If they all gather in Israel," declared Nasrallah, "it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide."

Nor is Nasrallah a lone voice. Naim Qassem, Hezbollah's deputy leader, has said that "the history of Jews has proven that, regardless of the Zionist proposal, they are people who are evil in their ideas". ...

... Hezbollah has killed probably more Muslims than anybody else, as well as Christians, Jews and others.

Hezbollah's leaders and its media peddle classic anti-Semitic tropes and lies. They refer to Jews in the basest of terms, labelling them "apes and pigs", and suggesting that "you will find no one more miserly or greedy than they are".

Hezbollah's leaders and media make spurious claims about Jewish conspiracies and world domination, and they deny the Holocaust, suggesting that "the Jews invented the legend of the Nazi atrocities".

Hezbollah's hatred of Jews is a noxious mix, which, in the words of one writer, fuses Arab nationalist-based anti-Zionism, anti-Jewish rhetoric from the Koran, and, most disturbingly, the antique anti-Semitic beliefs and conspiracy theories of European fascism". ...

*col 480* Hezbollah is a menace throughout the middle east, but Israel is its principal target. That is no secret. In its founding manifesto in 1985, in which it also pledged its loyalty to Ayatollah Khomeini and urged the establishment of an Islamic regime, Hezbollah says of Israel:

"Our struggle will end only when this entity is obliterated... We recognise no treaty with it, no cease-fire, and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated." This is no mere rhetorical sabre-rattling; Hezbollah vehemently opposed the Oslo peace process and has fought any normalisation of relations between Israel and Arab countries. ...

Quite deliberately, Hezbollah has embedded its forces and weaponry in towns and villages, turning the people of southern Lebanon into human shields. Quite deliberately, it will, as it has done in the past, target civilian population centres in Israel, even vowing, in the words of Nasrallah, that there will be "no red lines" in any future conflict ...

*col 481* **John Spellar (Labour):** Do not the various elements that my right hon. Friend is describing show the indivisible nature of Hezbollah? It does not have separate wings but

is one criminal terrorist entity.

**Joan Ryan:** ... the British Government have long held the view that Hezbollah's military wing is involved in conducting and supporting terrorism. In 2001, the Hezbollah External Security Organisation was added to the list of proscribed organisations. In 2008, this proscription was extended by a reference to the "military wing of Hezbollah, including the Jihad Council and all units reporting to it (including the Hezbollah External Security Organisation)".

Hezbollah's political wing, however, is not proscribed, even though this distinction is not one that Hezbollah itself has ever recognised.

**John Woodcock (Labour Co-op):** ... it should make both the Government Front-Bench team and our Opposition Front-Bench team deeply uneasy that they are effectively in an alliance in refusing to recognise the bogus distinction between the so-called military wing and the rest ...

*col 482* **Nick Boles (Conservative):** ... does [Joan Ryan] agree you do not have to be a friend of Israel to believe that Hezbollah, in its entirety, is a terrorist organisation? You can be a friend of Syria, a friend of Lebanon or a friend of the entire middle east, but you should want Hezbollah, in its entirety, to be banned. ...

**Joan Ryan:** ... In 2009, Naim Qassem, Hezbollah's deputy general secretary, made it clear that "the same leadership that directs the parliamentary and government work also leads jihad actions in the struggle against Israel".

It could not be clearer. He repeated this message three years later, declaring: "We don't have a military wing and a political one; we don't have Hezbollah on one hand and the resistance party on the other...Every element of Hezbollah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, are in the service of the resistance, and we have nothing but the resistance as a priority." Those are Hezbollah's own words. ...

*col 483* Last summer, marchers at the al-Quds day parade in London displayed Hezbollah flags, causing great offence to so many, especially in the Jewish community. Once again, they were exploiting the utterly bogus separation that the Government choose to make.

I pay tribute to Jewish communal organisations, such as the Community Security Trust, the Board of Deputies and the Jewish Leadership Council, which have tirelessly campaigned on the issue of Hezbollah proscription. I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, Riverside (Mrs Ellman), as well as the hon. Member for Hendon (Dr Offord) and the Mayor of London, for their efforts to persuade the Government to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety.

I note not only the Government's unwillingness to do so but their inability to explain or justify why they will not act. I understand that, in conflict situations, it is sometimes necessary to keep open channels of communication to facilitate dialogue and to encourage those who are engaged in violence to abandon the bomb and the bullet for the ballot box. However, there is not a shred of evidence to suggest that this is Hezbollah's intention. In both its rhetoric and its actions, this leopard shows no sign of changing its spots. ...

*col 484* After last June's terrorist attack at London Bridge, the Prime Minister said "there is, to be frank, far too much tolerance of extremism in our country."

I agree. Hezbollah is an organisation that is driven by a hatred of Jews, that promotes and encourages terrorism and that calls for the destruction of the middle east's only democracy—a key British ally in the region. However, as long as the Government do not proscribe Hezbollah's so-called political wing, the tolerance will continue. ...

**Theresa Villiers (Conservative):** ... As the right hon. Lady stated in her speech and as many others stated in their interventions, the distinction currently made in our law between Hezbollah's political and military wings is artificial. Hezbollah is a single operation, and that has been stated by its leadership on numerous occasions. ...

*col 485* We should be under no illusion: Hezbollah poses a serious threat to the citizens of this country and to our neighbours across Europe, and we should proscribe it in all its

forms. ...

By limiting proscription to the so-called military wing, we are undermining the ability of the police to protect us from the danger posed by this group. ...

The partial proscription of Hezbollah has not deterred the group from engaging in criminal conduct on British soil. Moreover, the Community Security Trust reports that Hezbollah has been heavily involved in the drugs trade in South America. In February 2016, the DEA uncovered a massive Hezbollah money laundering and drug trafficking scheme. In the view of the DEA, Hezbollah enjoys established business relationships with the South American drug cartels and is responsible for trafficking large quantities of cocaine into Europe and the US. ...

*col 486* Quite frankly, the annual al-Quds Day march is a scandal. It is not acceptable that people can fly the Hezbollah flag on the streets of London and get away with it simply by adding a post-it note claiming the support shown is for the political wing, not the military aspect of the organisation. This has to stop. ...

**Ian Austin (Labour):** ... the organisation has carried out terrorist attacks and racist murders in the middle east, in Europe and across the world. Its stated aim is the destruction of Israel, but it does not limit its attacks to people in Israel; it targets Jewish people anywhere and everywhere.

It is not true to claim that there is a political wing and a military wing. As has been said, Hezbollah itself does not make this distinction, and the supposed distinction undermines the fight against terrorism. ...

*col 487* Hezbollah has made that absolutely clear. It declared in 1992 that the war is on “until Israel ceases to exist and the last Jew in the world has been eliminated. Israel is completely evil and must be erased from the face of the Earth.”

*col 488* Israel’s military believes that, in a future conflict, Hezbollah will be able to launch 1,500 rockets and missiles a day. Israel has increased its defensive capabilities, but Hezbollah is likely to target military facilities, important infrastructure and civilian population centres. ...

Sadly, Israel’s experience in southern Lebanon was repeated in Gaza. Israel signed an agreement with the Palestinian Authority on movement and access to Gaza, which gave the Palestinians control over their borders for the first time in history, allowed imports and exports, and approved the construction of a seaport and discussions on an airport. Israel pulled out of Gaza but, just as in Lebanon, an Islamist movement, a terrorist organisation, a powerful armed militia—this time Hamas, also equipped by Iran and just as committed to Israel’s destruction as Hezbollah—launched a coup, banned elections, drove out Fatah, threw fellow Palestinians from the rooftops, summarily executed people outside mosques after Friday prayers and declared themselves the new rulers of Gaza, saying that they would use the strip as a base to destroy Israel. The unilateral withdrawal of 8,500 Israelis from Gaza was met not by peace but, after Hamas’s brutal takeover, by rockets and attack tunnels. When we look at the experience in Lebanon and in Gaza, we can understand why, whether or not people in this Chamber like it, the Israelis are very reticent about pulling out of the west bank. ...

*col 489* The late Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, one of Hezbollah’s most influential figures, peddled anti-Semitic conspiracy theories about Jews. He declared: “The Jews want to be a world superpower...the Jews will work on the basis that Jewish interests are above all world interests.”

I have criticised the Government for not proscribing Hezbollah, but I also wish to address some remarks to my party. In 2009, at a meeting of the so-called Stop the War Coalition, which must be the worst or most inappropriately named organisation in British politics, the leader of the Labour party said that he had invited “friends” from Hamas and Hezbollah to an event in Parliament. Later, when asked why he had called them friends, he said: “I use it in a collective way, saying our friends are prepared to talk.”

He also said: “There is not going to be a peace process unless there is talks involving Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas”.

First, who would describe a racist, fascistic and terrorist organisation like Hezbollah as friends? Social democrats—indeed, all democrats—should always be crystal clear about how they describe totalitarian movements and Governments, whether that is Hezbollah or, for instance, the Iranian dictatorship that backs Hezbollah.

Secondly, the statements by the leaders of Hezbollah make it very clear that they have absolutely no interest in the negotiations and compromises that could lead to peace. ...

*col 490* **David Jones (Conservative):** ... Hezbollah's activities have led to it being designated a terrorist organisation in many parts of the world. In 1996, Israel listed Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation, followed by the United States in 1997. It has also been proscribed by Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, France and Bahrain. In March 2016, the Gulf Co-operation Council designated it a terrorist organisation ...

*col 491* ... in November last year, most of the Arab League's 22 members condemned Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation ...

The United Kingdom's position on Hezbollah has been somewhat more nuanced. In 2001, the UK proscribed Hezbollah's External Security Organisation under the Terrorism Act 2000. That proscription was extended to the military wing, including the Jihad Council, in 2008 as a consequence of Hezbollah's targeting of British soldiers in Iraq. ...

However, the British Government have consistently been reluctant to extend the proscription to the entirety of Hezbollah. In an explanatory memorandum to the European Scrutiny Committee in August 2013, the then Minister for Europe, my right hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington), stated that although the UK does not engage with Hezbollah's political wing, some EU member states do engage with it as a political party in Lebanon and therefore had concerns over the effect of EU designation on that engagement. ...

Hezbollah is, in reality, a single entity, and it is ludicrous to suggest that it is not.

*col 492* As a single entity, Hezbollah is a threat to the entire world. British interests, not least, are affected by it. ...

**Louise Ellman (Labour Co-op):** ... The evidence that Hezbollah engages in terrorism and engenders hate is overwhelming. Hezbollah was behind the bombing of the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires in 1994, killing 85 people. It has murdered people—Jews, Christians, Muslims and others—in places such as Nigeria, Thailand, Bulgaria and Cyprus. It is complicit with the murderous Assad regime in Syria. Operating with Assad and Iran, it is part of the "axis of resistance" that seeks to confront Sunni power, western influence and Israel. It is a malign influence.

*col 493* Hezbollah specifically promotes anti-Semitism. Al-Manar, Hezbollah TV, was the first media outlet to make the false claim that 4,000 Jews or Israelis did not go to work in the World Trade Centre on 9/11, allegedly on the basis of advice from Mossad. This lie has now become a widespread anti-Semitic libel. ...

This issue has very serious implications for us in the UK. At the annual al-Quds march in London last June, Hezbollah's green and yellow flag—the same flag displayed in military operations—was put on show. The purpose of the march and of al-Quds day itself is to agitate for violent resistance and the destruction of the state of Israel. At the centre of the flag, the largest Arabic word in green reads "Hezbollah", out of which emerges a globe with an upraised arm grasping an assault rifle. The letter A of Allah is linked to the upraised arm grasping the assault rifle, signifying the ideological legitimisation of Hezbollah's armed resistance as being divinely sanctioned. That message is clear, menacing and extremely powerful. The menacing chants at the march on the streets of London this year included the heinous cry: "Zionists/ISIS are the same. Only difference is the name." ...

**Zac Goldsmith:** ... It is also worth pointing out that the march was led by the director of the Islamic Human Rights Commission, who, during his speech, blamed the Grenfell Tower tragedy on the Zionists. As we all know, the word "Zionists" is a euphemism for Jews. ...

**Louise Ellman:** ... All this is inciting violence, hatred and division on the streets of the

UK. This is happening as anti-Semitic offences in this country reach record levels, as shown in the recent Community Security Trust report. ... Tahra Ahmed, a volunteer running a network helping the survivors of the Grenfell fire tragedy has claimed that the 71 people who perished were “burnt...in a Jewish sacrifice”. That is horrendous—horrendous incitement to hatred. ...

**Matthew Offord (Conservative):** ... Hezbollah claims to be the party of God, but it is simply a genocidal, anti-Semitic terror group based in Lebanon that seeks the destruction of Israel and the extermination of all Jews worldwide. ...

*col 495* ... The Islamic Human Rights Commission, which organises the [al-Quds] march, has provided guidance on its website for participants, advising that although flags of illegal organisations could not be waved at the event, demonstrators could bring a Hezbollah flag to show support for its political wing. ...

The Home Secretary has recently explained the position on offences in respect of displaying flags: “For an offence to be committed, the context and manner in which the flag is displayed must demonstrate that it is specifically in support of the proscribed military wing of the group.”

Taking that into account, flags flown at the march featured the disclaimers that I have mentioned, even though we have been reminded that the organisation itself does not recognise any difference between the two wings. ...

*col 496* This year, the march was led by a director of the IHRC, Nazim Ali, who in a speech ... blamed the Grenfell fire tragedy on “the Zionist supporters of the Tory Party”.

He also accused the Israel Defence Forces of being a “terrorist organisation that murdered Palestinians, Jews and British soldiers.”

Participants in the rally called for the destruction of Israel and waved slogans, including one stating “We are all Hezbollah”. Shockingly, but perhaps unsurprisingly, the Leader of the Opposition has spoken at the annual event in the past. I take this opportunity to call on him not to do so again in future. ...

*col 497* It is not just the Jewish community in this country who are distressed by Hezbollah’s overt presence in the UK; it also distresses those of us who deplore terrorism and hate all kinds of bigotry and those of us who want this country to be a welcoming and safe place for our many diverse communities.

**Sharon Hodgson (Labour):** ... As we know, it is involved in a number of terrorist activities and has made clear its desire to wipe Israel off the face of the earth, but the main concern that I wish to raise today concerns its anti-Semitic language. Let me take a moment to read out some of the comments made by leaders of Hezbollah to emphasise how shocking they are.

Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah’s leader, has been quoted as saying—I read this out with deep discomfort—“the Jews...are a cancer which is liable to spread...at any moment.” ...

*col 498* What is especially pertinent when we recommit ourselves to standing up to this hate-filled language is that, as we speak, many people are gathering near Parliament Square to remember the holocaust at the Holocaust Memorial Day service. ...

The theme of this year’s Holocaust Memorial Day is the power of words. ... It reminds us never to be complacent. Right now, an organisation that calls for the annihilation of one of our allies and a whole ethnic population is lawfully allowed to be supported in this country, and last year, as we have heard, its flags were flown on the streets of our capital. Hatred should not go unchallenged, wherever it may raise its ugly head. ...

*col 499* **Jim Shannon (DUP):** ... Let me make it clear that this is not a campaign to satisfy a handful of MPs; it goes much wider than that. In a campaign organised by the Israel Britain Alliance and its numerous partners, more than 10,000 people have written to their MPs to register their concerns about the Government’s delusion that Hezbollah is two separate organisations and to highlight the Government’s dereliction of their first duty to protect the public. ...

... by dragging our feet over taking the necessary action, we are placing the British people in grave danger. It is our responsibility to look after them.

*col 500* Hezbollah has been responsible for attacks on Jewish people across the globe, yet last year, as the hon. Member for Newark witnessed, people with Hezbollah flags marched down Oxford Street celebrating al-Quds day with complete disregard and with the AK-47 on their flags. If that is not provocative and illegal, I would like to know what is. Along with the flags and banners that day, we had all the associated inflammatory rhetoric because the purpose of the demonstration was to agitate for violent resistance and the destruction of the state of Israel under the euphemism of “liberating al-Quds”—Jerusalem. The context was militaristic, not political. ...

*col 502* **Theresa Villiers:** ... Does the hon. Gentleman agree that extending proscription in the way that pretty much every Member has called for is important if we are to ensure that Hezbollah cannot use the banking system in this country to further its evil ends?

**Jim Shannon:** If we starve Hezbollah of its funds, we will take away the blood that it needs to exist. It is important that we do that. Proscribing Hezbollah and removing all its resources—the bones in its system—is one way to achieve what we want. ...

**Stuart McDonald (SNP):** ... Members have repeatedly made it clear that Hezbollah in its broadest sense has engaged in atrocious terrorist activity. ...

*col 503* Is there any possible counter-argument? In supporting partial proscription, the Home Office under the previous Labour Government pointed to the “legitimate political, social and humanitarian role Hizballah plays in Lebanon”, while in a debate just before Christmas, when this issue was raised, the Security Minister pointed out that Hezbollah formed part of the Government of Lebanon. ...

The next question is: does it matter that there is a degree of unity at the top, if there are clearly distinct branches that can be separated? It is only fair to record that different countries have taken different approaches to that question. ...

... it is relevant to note that under the 2000 Act, the Home Secretary has powers but not a duty to proscribe organisations—it is a “may”, not a “must”. As some have alluded to, one wonders whether there are other considerations at play here, including a desire to keep certain diplomatic channels open and concerns about maintaining stability in Lebanon. ...

*col 504* **Nick Thomas-Symonds (Labour):** ... Labour Members unequivocally condemn support for violence and acts of terrorism, the likes of which have been described in the Chamber today. ...

The then Home Office Minister, Tony McNulty—a former Member of this House—said in the House on 15 July 2008 that the proscription of Hezbollah’s military wing would not affect the role it played in Lebanon, but it would send out “a clear message that we condemn Hezbollah’s violence and support for terrorism.” ...

*col 505* It is for the Government to keep under review the organisations they proscribe. These are always careful decisions, and clearly, in difficult and volatile situations, there has to be a balance between making absolutely clear our abhorrence at the use of violence to achieve political ends and, at the same time, seeking to facilitate and encourage solutions to conflict through participation in the democratic process. ...

An internal document containing the position of those on the Labour Front Bench got into the public domain today.

**Ian Austin:** ... Given that he has mentioned the document, why does it not mention Hezbollah’s anti-Semitism? Why does it suggest that Hezbollah could be a partner for peace when it is absolutely clear that it has no interest at all in the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians?

*col 506* **Nick Thomas-Symonds:** ... let me be clear that we condemn anti-Semitism in all its forms. Secondly, with regard to peace going forward, we have to be careful about closing off diplomatic channels. ...

**Theresa Villiers:** Hezbollah is a violent, genocidal terrorist organisation dedicated to the destruction of the state of Israel, and I challenge the Opposition Front-Bench spokesman to support the calls that have come from both sides of the House today to proscribe

Hezbollah in its entirety.

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:** ... The Opposition absolutely condemn the violence, and we continue to support the proscription of the military wing of Hezbollah ... We believe that engagement with the Government and Parliament of Lebanon is important for the wider middle east peace process, and we should be careful about damaging that engagement ...

*col 507* **The Minister for Security and Economic Crime (Ben Wallace):** ... The Government are proud to be a friend of Israel, and we are proud to support working with Israel. No Conservative Member, and no one in this House, supports the use of terrorism or violence. ...

... Hezbollah was established during the Lebanese civil war and in the aftermath of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon in 1982. From the outset, resistance to Israel has been an important part of Hezbollah's agenda. However, Hezbollah also represents Lebanon's Shi'a community and, over time, has gained significant support from that community. Hezbollah provides social and political functions in Lebanon. As a major political group and the largest non-state military force in the country, Hezbollah clearly plays an important role in Lebanon.

The UK Government have long held the view that elements of Hezbollah have been involved in conducting and supporting terrorism and, as a result, proscribed Hezbollah's External Security Organisation in 2001. Not only did I listen but I heeded many of the comments made today about Hezbollah's statements and beliefs, which are outrageous, disgusting and should be condemned at every opportunity. Hezbollah is anti-Semitic and wishes the destruction of our ally and friend, the state of Israel. We support none of that.

*col 508* Although the proscription of Hezbollah in its entirety is kept under review, our current position maintains a balance. I have heard from many Members today that Hezbollah's military and political wings are indivisible, joined at the hip and centrally led. That is not, as the hon. Member for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (Stuart C. McDonald) pointed out, the view of every country. Australia, New Zealand and the EU take a different view. ...

**David Jones:** ... Is it not his difficulty that it is Hezbollah's own view that it is indivisible, and considers itself a single organisation?

**Ben Wallace:** ... My right hon. Friend makes a valid point, but he must recognise that it is difficult to separate Hezbollah from the state of Lebanon. Hezbollah is in the Parliament and the Government, and that represents a different challenge from that which we find with many other terrorist groups. ...

*col 509* **Matthew Offord:** Let me cut through the rhetoric and ask a simple question: what does the Minister think is the motivation of British nationals flying the flag of a foreign political organisation whose stated aims are to kill every Jew and to annihilate the state of Israel?

**Ben Wallace:** I am not going to speak on behalf of protestors walking down Oxford Street whom I have never met. ...

Whether it is part 3A of the Public Order Act 1986, or part 3 itself, which is about racial hatred, that Act gives police the powers to prosecute people. It is perfectly possible for someone to stand up with a national flag and incite hatred or religious hatred, and to then find themselves prosecuted for and convicted of a criminal offence. Not proscribing Hezbollah in no way prevents the police or the Crown Prosecution Service from taking action against that type of incitement. ...

*col 510* I think that we all feel, especially in this social media age, in which we are often inundated by hate and intimidation, whether on Twitter or in emails, that there is a broader debate about how we can deal with and prosecute hate and extremism in this country. Unfortunately, from my point of view it seems to be on an upward rather than downward curve among some groups of people in society.

Political parties of all colours need to send very strong messages to supporters, allies or over-excited individuals who seek to take our parties' names and use them alongside

hatred, anti-Semitism, racism and Islamophobic comment. All that is unacceptable. ...

*col 511* Section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000 provides a power to the Home Secretary to proscribe the organisation if she believes that it is concerned in terrorism. The Act specifies that “an organisation is concerned in terrorism if it commits or participates in an act of terrorism, prepares for terrorism, promotes or encourages terrorism, or is otherwise concerned in terrorism.”

If the test is met, the Secretary of State must then exercise her discretion to proscribe the organisation. In considering whether to exercise this discretion, she is also guided by the nature and scale of the organisation’s activities, the specific threat that it poses to the United Kingdom, the specific threat that it poses to British nationals overseas, the organisation’s presence in the United Kingdom and the need to support other members of the international community in tackling terrorism.

Given the wide-ranging impact of proscription, the Home Secretary exercises her powers to proscribe only after a thorough review of the available relevant information and evidence on the organisation. ...

Peaceful protest is a vital part of our democratic society. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to gather together and to demonstrate their views, however uncomfortable or repugnant those can be to the majority of us, but they must do so within the law. ... Protesters’ rights need to be balanced with the rights of others to go about their business without fear of intimidation or serious disruption to the community. Rights to peaceful protest do not extend to violent or threatening behaviour, and the police have powers to deal with as many such acts, as I have said. ...

*col 512* We should not forget that Hezbollah’s birth and strengths started in the civil war of Lebanon, when Lebanese were killing Lebanese, Druze were killing Muslims, and Muslims were killing Christians. We think that the way to ensure that Hezbollah is contained and persuaded to follow the course of peace ... is to have a strong state of Lebanon. ...

**Matthew Offord:** That is all very well about Lebanon, but my concern is the constituents of Hendon, when they cannot go into central London and the police are overstretched, when they are spat at and called Nazis and when people are vile and anti-Semitic towards them. ...

**Ben Wallace:** ... that is a matter for the police, if people are spitting and inciting hatred. In this country, we have operational independence between Ministers and the police. ... fundamentally what will protect my hon. Friend’s constituents, whether they are Christian, Jewish or Muslim, is for Parliament to give our law enforcement and security organisations powers and to fund them, so that they can use those powers to keep us safe ...

*col 513* If my hon. Friend’s constituents are being abused, that is not a failure of the Government; it is a question to ask the police. ... I have to say that it is not because of the partial proscription or de-proscription of Hezbollah. ...

My commitment as Security Minister is to continue to keep groups such as Hezbollah under review. We will continue to talk to our friends and allies in the region and around the world, but we will fundamentally focus on what we need to do to keep the United Kingdom safe, for the short and long term. ...

**Joan Ryan:** ... I draw attention to the fact that not a single Back-Bench Member who has spoken or intervened today has opposed the motion, which I think speaks volumes about where the House is on the matter. The public agree with us. As the hon. Member for Hendon said, a ComRes poll reported today shows that 81% of the public also believe that Hezbollah should be proscribed in its entirety. ...

The havoc, death and destruction that Hezbollah has caused in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Israel—indeed, across the middle east—as well as in Nigeria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Argentina, Thailand and other places have been outlined today, to our horror. What about the streets of London? The CST has made it clear that the domestic consequences of the artificial division with regard to Hezbollah has consequences here:

a policy is pursued that allows public support for a terrorist and anti-Semitic organisation. ...

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved,*

That this House believes that Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation driven by an antisemitic ideology that seeks the destruction of Israel; notes that Hezbollah declares itself to be one organisation without distinguishable political or military wings; is concerned that the military wing of that organisation is proscribed, but its political wing is not; and calls on the Government to include Hezbollah in its entirety on the list of proscribed organisations.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-25/debates/DB6D525D-BFD3-479E-8E78-94CDB2E2F28F/ProscriptionOfHezbollah>

## House of Commons Written Answers

### Israel: Occupied Territories

**Daniel Kawczynski (Conservative)** [123183] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the compliance with international law of the Israeli occupation of Shebaa Farms.

**Alistair Burt:** Whilst we have not made an assessment on this specific issue, we consider the Shebaa Farms, within the Golan region, to be Occupied Territory. We continue to call on Israel, as the occupying power, to uphold its obligations under international law. This includes abiding by UN Security Council Resolution 497 (1981) and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/123183/>

### Palestinians: USA

**Matthew Offord (Conservative)** [123197] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the effect on the Occupied Palestinian Territories of the decision of the House of Representatives to end foreign aid to the Palestinian Authority.

**Alistair Burt:** We are working closely with the United States (US) to understand the impact of the Taylor Force Act on their programme and the implications for other donors, were it to be approved by the US Senate.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123197/>

### Palestinians: UNRWA

**Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat)** [123305] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions she has held with her counterpart in the US administration on funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

**Alistair Burt:** The UK has engaged in the recent United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Advisory Commission meetings which include the United States, all main donors and host Governments. The UK has highlighted our concern about the impact on the activities of UNRWA that any unexpected reductions or delays in predicted donor disbursements might have. The United States has consistently been UNRWA's largest single donor. My officials are working closely with UNRWA and donors on how best to ensure continuity of essential services to Palestinian refugees at this time. The UK remains firmly committed to supporting UNRWA and Palestinian refugees across the Middle

East, having so far provided around £50 million in 2017/18.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123305/>

### **Palestinians: Children**

**Gavin Shuker (Labour Co-op)** [123374] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterparts on the detention of Palestinian children.

**Alistair Burt:** The issue of children in Israeli military detention remains a human rights priority for the UK. Our Embassy officials in Tel Aviv most recently raised the issue with the Israeli authorities on 16 January, and senior British Government officials raised this issue with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 8 January. I raised our concerns on this issue with the Israeli Government during my visit to Israel in August 2017

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123374/>

### **UNRWA**

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [123994] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much was disbursed from the public purse in voluntary contributions excluding assessed or non-discretionary contributions to the UN Relief and Works Agency in each financial year since 2010.

**Alistair Burt:** The amount of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in each calendar year since 2010 is given in the table below. This data is published each year in the Statistics for International Development (SID) publication. Figures for 2017 will be released next year.

The UK remains firmly committed to supporting UNRWA and Palestinian refugees across the Middle East and we have so far provided around £50 million in 2017/18.

<b>(£ millions)</b>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Bilateral ODA through Multilateral	2.1	4.5	5.8	18.4	29.1	30	21
Core Multilateral ODA	27	30.5	47.5	22.9	36.6	34	33.4
<b>Total UK ODA to UNRWA</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>53.3</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>54.4</b>

*Source: Statistics for International Development 2010 - 2017*

ODA figures are produced only on a calendar year basis in line with the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, Development Assistance Committee definitions.

Bilateral ODA through multilateral is funding to multilateral organisations for specific programmes or for specific countries. Core multilateral ODA describes un-earmarked funds from national governments which are pooled with other donors' funding and disbursed as part of the core budget of the multilateral organisation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123994/>

## **Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

### **Universal Periodic Review 29th session: Lord Ahmad's statement**

... I welcome Israel's engagement with the UPR and am pleased to see the positive steps taken since its last review, including its commitment to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking; and the progress Israel has made on gender

equality. However, the lack of reference in Israel's national submission to substantive progress on human rights issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is disappointing. Areas of concern include the need to address Israeli policies on settlement expansion and demolitions.

The advancement by the Israeli authorities of plans, tenders and permits for thousands of settlement units across the West Bank is deeply concerning. Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine both the physical viability of the two-state solution and perceptions of Israel's commitment to it.

I am also seriously concerned by the Israeli authorities' continuous demolition of Palestinian properties in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. As the UK has made clear in the past, these demolitions cause unnecessary suffering and are harmful to the objective of achieving peace.

Finally, the matter of children in detention in Israel remains highly concerning. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Israel is a State Party, clearly sets out the need to grant special care and protection to children. I hope Israel recognises these responsibilities and takes the necessary action to ensure that child detainees are protected, including to engage with partners, like the UK, on best practice. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/universal-periodic-review-29th-session-lord-ahmads-statement>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-10125 Ross Greer (Green): Ahed Tamimi** – That the Parliament notes with concern the reported detention since 19 December 2017 of 16-year-old Ahed Tamimi by the Israeli forces illegally occupying Palestine; notes that Ahed is from Nabi Saleh, which a village in the West Bank; understands that the village has faced encroachment by Israeli settlements, resulting, it believes, in land confiscations and access to water being restricted, all of which are illegal under international law; understands that Ahed and her family, along with many others from Nabi Saleh, have faced sustained persecution and intimidation by Israeli forces due to their efforts in resisting occupation; believes that her arrest followed the shooting of her 14-year-old cousin in the head at a protest against the relocation of the United States' embassy in Israel on 14 December and the reported subsequent harassment of the family at their home by Israeli forces; expresses its grave concern at what it sees as the use of military detention against children and young people by Israel and the findings by UNICEF, which suggest that ill-treatment of young people by the Israeli military detention system is “widespread, systematic, and institutionalised”, and supports the calls by Amnesty International, and other human rights bodies, for Ahed's immediate release.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10125>

## Council of Europe Debate

**The Israeli-Palestinian peace process: the role of the Council of Europe**

**Mr Corlatean (Romania):** ... the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy decided to hold a meeting in Paris in December last year, to which it invited both the Israeli and Palestinian delegations. The meeting related to the possibility of relaunching the peace process and, of course, how our Assembly could support that. It was a constructive meeting. I welcome the constructive approach of both the Israeli and Palestinian delegations at that meeting and during our discussions here in Strasbourg and the fact that all participants – members of the committee and the two delegations – wanted not to

enter into a contradictory situation and not to condemn, but rather to try to define the lines to generate a constructive approach and a positive contribution to the main goal, which is the peace process and a two-State solution, based on direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine. ...

The lines that we defined together in Paris and this week during two meetings of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy represent the substance of the draft resolution. ...

**Mr Howell (United Kingdom, Spokesperson for the European Conservatives Group):** ... It is important to say that we all wish peace for this part of the world and encourage the Council of Europe to work to that end. However, it would be a lot easier and take a lot of tension out of the situation if we started from a position where the Palestinian side accepted that the State of Israel has a right to exist, and if it did not seek to expunge the country from school textbooks and name schools after terrorists and Nazi sympathisers. Anything the Council of Europe can do to help the situation would be welcomed. We also need to see the disarmament of Hezbollah and Hamas and to prevent the crisis – I use the term advisedly – of miscarriages occurring in southern Israel.

Most importantly, the Council of Europe could do a lot to promote organisations that are already encouraging peace between Israel and the Palestinian territories. I use as an example a charity that I have visited on a number of occasions in Tel Aviv called Save a Child's Heart. Israeli doctors undertake detailed heart surgery on Palestinian children and others from around the world ...

**Ms Mehl (Norway, Spokesperson for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe):** ... President Trump's statement on moving the United States embassy to Jerusalem is of grave concern, but so is the prospect of the United States discontinuing financial support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. UNRWA is important in securing fundamental services for Palestinian refugees in the conflict areas and contributes to stability in the region. ...

**Ms Kavvadia (Greece, Spokesperson for the Group of the Unified European Left):** ... we now see Palestinian protesters convicted and imprisoned with long sentences, even if they are under-age. A recent example, which has been exposed through the media, is that of Ahed Tamimi, aged 16. She was arrested in December and is still in prison, facing a military court, for slapping an Israeli soldier during a protest. ...

No one has the right to remain silent. We all recognise that the solution for peace in the Middle East must be based on a two-state solution, with safety and security for all Israeli and Palestinian citizens and an absolute respect for freedom and human rights. Far-right populism and nationalism have been an obstacle to peace for too long. ...

**Mr Byrne (United Kingdom, Spokesperson for the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group):** ... This is a welcome and balanced report that allows us to restate our iron-clad commitment to protect the security and prosperity of the State of Israel and to recognise the new threats, which we will oppose, from an expansionist Iran that is determined to build a road to the Mediterranean and to expand its sophisticated manufacture of missiles in south Lebanon. But the report also allows us to recognise the deepening crisis affecting Palestine. It allows us to recognise the illegal settlements across nearly half of Palestinian land; the insecurity of Palestinian access to water, power and mobile phones; and the throttling of Gaza, where our observers were denied access and where we called, in Resolution 2142, for the lifting of the blockade. It allows us to recognise the scandal of Palestinian children tried in military courts, highlighted for the world to see in the case of Ahed Tamini this week, and to recognise the foolishness of Donald Trump's decision to move the American embassy to Jerusalem and to slash the vital help supplied by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

The great risk today is that a new generation of Palestinians are giving up on hope and giving up on the future. We have a special responsibility to rekindle that hope,

because this Assembly was born from the same determination to resist any return to the horrors of Nazi Europe as that which gave rise to the State of Israel. ...

**Mr Ghilechi (Republic of Moldova):** ... One of the first sentences of the report is the statement condemning the President of the United State of America for declaring that the time has come to recognise Jerusalem officially as the capital of Israel and that the United States would move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. On the one hand, I understand that such decision needs to be evaluated very carefully, but on the other, every single President of the United States since 1992, including Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, promised to move the embassy to Jerusalem. ...

I completely understand the position of the opponents of the move and, if I think rationally myself, the decision to move the embassy should have come as the final piece of the puzzle after extracting concessions from both parties, but sometimes you really need to jolt things up in order to start moving. ...

**Mr Abushahla (Palestine, Partner for Democracy):** ... President Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, neglecting the information that it was occupied after 1967 and denying Palestinian rights in Jerusalem as their capital for thousands of years, is a gift to the extremists and has proved that the United States administration is part of the problem rather than the solution. It encourages the extremists to violate international law and resolutions.

The whole peace process is in danger. ... Occupation continues, settlements on our land increase and there are daily attacks on our people with killing, violence and shoot to kill used on peaceful demonstrations. Ahd Tamimi is in jail because she refused the occupation and defended her house. The siege and blockade at Gaza continue, as does pressure on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency to stop education and health care for Palestinian refugees. Lastly, Jerusalem is out of peace negotiations. ...

What is needed now is an international framework for the peace process, with more political rule from the European Union, plus their financial contribution; recognition of the Palestinian State and east Jerusalem as its capital; and the end of the Israeli occupation to save peace and not push our people to lose faith in international law and turn to extremists and violence. Please do not take the olive branch from our hands. ...

**Ms Yasar (Turkey):** The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel goes against conscience and history. ... The decision of the United States is a punishment for Palestinians who are keen on the peace process and are party to it. ...

**Mr Cilevics (Latvia):** ... I quote the request for this debate: "The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories continues to be a major source of instability both in and beyond the region". Is that indeed the case? The region is torn by many pressing problems, including the Syrian crisis, which has caused many thousands of casualties and millions of refugees; rivalry between major powers of the Islamic world – Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt; the problematic aftermath of the Arab Spring; and the rise of Daesh and other terrorist groups. Has Israel anything to do with those and many other crucial problems? Scapegoating Israel on any pretext is misleading and counterproductive.

In fact, Israel is the only true democracy in the Middle East. It is not perfect, of course. Israel can and should be criticised, for example for the lack of due separation between religion and State. We strongly deplore the continuing expansion of settlements in the occupied territories. In the meantime, with regard to the independence of the judiciary, freedom of the media, gender equality, a vivid civil society and many other aspects, Israel is far ahead of any neighbouring State. Nevertheless, we keep concentrating our criticism on Israel. ...

**Mr Heer (Switzerland):** ... Today we have the remembrance day of the Holocaust. Our institution should protect Israel, which shares our common values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Instead of producing a useless report, we should encourage Arab civil society to share our values, but the Council of Europe accepts that anti-Semitism and hatred are part of the programme for schools in Palestine and most Muslim countries. ...

**Mr Schwabe (Germany):** Unlike the previous speaker, Mr Heer, I believe that this is our responsibility, particularly vis-à-vis Israel. I say that as a German member. This is a matter of State interest for Germany. Today is a day on which we are remembering the Holocaust, and in that context it is important that we bear in mind our responsibility regarding the existence of the State of Israel. ...

**Ms Lavie (Observer from Israel):** ... today's resolution is, as I have learned in the past two days, another expression of the obsessive preoccupation with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which has further distanced this Assembly from becoming a real partner in promoting dialogue.

I am deeply concerned that there are those who will use this resolution to avoid discussing the core issues. First, there is no alternative to real and direct negotiation between the State of Israel and the Palestinians. Secondly, meaningless, one-sided decisions do not advance dialogue. ...

**Ms Duranton (France):** ... although the decision by the United States administration creates uncertainty, we should not overestimate the consequences. The fact that lasting peace prospects have become more and more remote is something that rests with the political choices of both parties. The Israeli Government, under pressure from extremist groups, is taking an increasingly hard line. ... The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is worsening, and security there remains fragile.

On the Palestinian side, Fatah and Hamas have reached an agreement, which was signed in Cairo in October last year under the aegis of the Egyptian authorities, but how will it be applied? ...

**Ms McCarthy (United Kingdom):** ... The continued illegal expansion of Israeli settlements, and the consequent fragmentation of the West Bank, has led many to doubt whether a two-State solution is indeed still viable. ... Yes, Israel has a right to protect itself, but the demolition of Palestinian homes and the construction of illegal settlements are not part of that.

Israel prides itself on being what it describes as the only democracy in the Middle East, but it has consistently been found to be in breach of international law. ...

Generations of young people have grown up knowing only division and conflict. Too many Palestinian children have been arrested, interrogated and detained. ... Ahed Tamimi, a 16-year-old Palestinian girl, has become something of a totemic figure in this debate. ... *The Guardian* ... interviewed Ahed when she was only 12. ... Ahed and her father, who was born in 1967, "have known only a life of checkpoints, identity papers, detentions, house demolitions, intimidation, humiliation and violence." ...

**Mr Crowe (Ireland):** ... I completely disagree with the decision of the United States President to declare Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to move the United States embassy to the city. That is an extremely dangerous, reckless and worrying move, and a crude attempt to normalise Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine, including east Jerusalem. ...

I urge all members of the Assembly to reject that move and to pressure their own countries to officially recognise the State of Palestine, with east Jerusalem as its capital.

The unjust and apartheid regime that Israel implements in Palestine has once again been brought under the international spotlight because of the arrest of Ahed Tamimi. ... What horrendous and grievous crime did this child commit? She had the audacity to slap the face of an Israeli soldier outside her family home in the West Bank village of Nabi Salih, which Israel illegally occupies. ...

**Mr Khader (Palestine, Partner for Democracy):** ... We definitely agree with the saying that peace needs to be reached through negotiation and dialogue. We also agree that the two peoples – the Israelis and the Palestinians – should find a way to live together, but how will they do that? To live together means to recognise each other, not that the Palestinians should be repeatedly asked to unconditionally recognise the State of Israel at a time when the State of Israel does not recognise the existence of the Palestinian people, let alone their rights. ...

**Mr Albakkar (Jordan, Partner for Democracy):** ... based on the Hashemite custodianship of Jerusalem holy sites, we look for your support. ...

... when people express their opinion in the Knesset – the place where democracy and freedom should be practised – do you consider that to be terrorism? That is what Israelis thought when they used security forces to kick out their parliamentary colleagues from the Knesset. That is the freedom that Israelis practise in their Knesset. ...

**Mr Blaha (Slovak Republic):** ... Of course, the security of the Israeli people is a very important issue, but it cannot be an excuse for killings, injustice, economic blockades and wars. I agree with some colleagues that we should also be aware of rising anti-Jewish sentiment in Europe. In my country, I do my best to fight against neo-fascism and right-wing extremism. Fortunately, anti-Jewish sentiment in my country is not growing. I am happy to say that the huge majority of Slovakian society respects and admires the wonderful Jewish culture. However, there is a big difference between the protection of Jews as a minority in Europe and the uncritical protection of Israel in its geopolitics and military politics. To be critical of Israel does not mean being anti-Semitic. That argument, used by some Israeli representatives, is childish.

In a struggle between Davids and Goliaths, I will always be on the side of the weaker – the side of the Davids. The Palestinian people have suffered a lot. They deserve freedom and social justice. ...

**Mr Sheppard (United Kingdom):** ... Towards the end of last year, Israel announced an aggressive new phase of settlement building in the occupied territories. Particularly to the east of Jerusalem, these developments will have the effect of cutting the West Bank in two and making it impossible to develop a contiguous Palestinian State in that area. Then, of course, Mr Trump's new year present to the world was to say that he would withdraw support to Palestinian refugees by cutting funding to UNRWA. For 50 years the world has looked to America to provide leadership on this most intractable and long-running of political conflicts, but now America has decided to take sides. You cannot be an advocate for one party in a dispute and hope on the other hand to be a mediator, so now that America has ruled itself out of its historic role, it falls to the States of Europe to fill the vacuum. ...

There are many courageous Israeli citizens in the field of journalism and civil and political activists who are working hard to advocate for human rights in Israel and who seek an accommodation and peace with their Palestinian neighbours. They believe that only an end to the occupation, and the creation of a Palestinian State, will ultimately guarantee the security of Israel and the safety of its citizens. They are correct in that belief, and we should make sure that their voices are heard in this Assembly and in the centres of power of our States. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/Records/2018/E/1801251000E.htm>

**Resolution: The Israeli–Palestinian peace process: the role of the Council of Europe**

<https://tinyurl.com/ycjpi5of>

## United Nations

### **Create Conditions for Resumed Talks, Special Coordinator Urges Security Council Ahead of Day-Long Debate on Middle East Peace Process**

Twenty-five years after the historic Oslo Accords, the United Nations had fallen into a pattern of managing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rather than resolving it, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process told the Security Council ... underscoring the Organization's responsibility to help the sides return to negotiations and quickly show results.

"Now is not the time to give up on Oslo," said Nickolay Mladenov via video link from

Jerusalem, but rather, to push for policies that rebuilt trust. The lack of political will to resume negotiations had elicited a heavy price: violence, settlement expansion, Palestinian political divide and the dire situation in Gaza under the control of Hamas. “Taken together, these elements kill hope,” he said. ...

However, the United States’ 6 December 2017 recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital had led to protests and low-level violence across the West Bank and Gaza, he said, while its greatly reduced \$60 million pledge to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) had heightened anxieties for 5.3 million refugees. ...

“We are at a critical point in the peace process,” he said, with the current volatility hardening positions, which played into the hands of extremists. The international community must build conditions for resumed talks. It was vital to support strengthening Palestinian institutions and enhancing service delivery in the West Bank and Gaza. “We can wait no longer to reverse the negative trajectory of this conflict”, he said. Every illegal settlement, every person killed and every failed effort in Gaza made it more difficult to overcome divisions. It was time to break that destructive pattern. ...

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, said that 2017 ended on a disheartening note as the world bore witness to decisions denigrating the Palestinian people’s rights and national aspirations, dismissing the global consensus that had prevailed for decades. ...

“No price tag can be put on the rights and dignity of any people”, who would not be quashed by threats, intimidation or punitive action. Palestinians remained resolute in calling for the application of international law to the question of Palestine. Nothing that the Palestinians had ever done should be misconstrued or cynically portrayed as a rejection of peace. It was, therefore, appalling to witness the resurgence of claims by the Israeli Prime Minister and other Government officials that the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, was not a man of peace. History and facts spoke for themselves and such claims could not be farther from the truth. ...

The world was witnessing in shocking detail the dehumanization of the Palestinian people, their subjugation and deprivation, attempts to erase their history, heritage and identity, and the systematic decimation of their communities and of their will and hope. ...

Palestinians were openly degraded and demonized by the occupying Power and the public was being incited against them to the point of outright extremism and terror. ...

Danny Danon (Israel) said the real threat came from Iran. Brave people had marched through Iranian streets demanding a better life and chanting: “Not Gaza, not Lebanon. I give my life for Iran.” He praised their moral fight against their Government. Detailing dangerous Iranian regime activities, he said Israel had warned of “Iranian tentacles of terror”, cited evidence of its build up in Lebanon through its proxy, Hizbullah, and its efforts to sneak into Israel. ...

Nikki R, Haley (United States) said that there was a lack of courageous leaders who were willing to step forward, acknowledge hard truths and make compromises in order to achieve peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. ... The United States had done nothing to pre-judge the final borders of Jerusalem or alter the status of the holy sites, rather, the United States remained committed to the possibility of a two-State solution, if agreed to by both parties. ...

Vassily A. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) said that the relaunching of the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue had been made considerably more difficult due to settlement activity and inflammatory rhetoric. Rather than advancing a viable plan, the international community had borne witness to well-known decisions on Jerusalem, which had been met by categorical rejections. ...

Karel Jan Gustaaf van Oosterom (Netherlands) ... expressed concern about developments on the ground, with tensions increasing over the past two months, and condemned all acts of violence, including the firing of rockets from Gaza, the killing of an Israeli citizen in the West Bank on 9 January and the cynical use by militants of the crossing at Kerem Shalom/Karm Abu Salem as a cover for building a tunnel. He was

also concerned by the high number of Palestinian casualties in protests and confrontations in the past months. ...

Stephen Benedict Hickey (United Kingdom) said his country envisioned Israeli and Palestinian States living side by side within secure recognized borders, and Jerusalem as their shared capital. The United Kingdom would contribute to all credible efforts to restart the peace process. Statements that demonized the Jewish people were unacceptable and he encouraged Palestinian leaders to implement recommendations from the Quartet report on incitement. ... The Palestinian Central Council's recommendation to de-recognize Israel were non-binding and unconstructive, and he welcomed the Palestinian Authority's recognition of Israel and support for the two-State solution. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13178.doc.htm>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Germany: Antisemitism

**John Mann (Labour)** [123639] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with their German counterparts on antisemitism and on implementing the conclusions of the recent report by the Second Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism.

**Alan Duncan:** In October 2017, Foreign and Commonwealth officials attended a briefing given by the authors of the report commissioned by the German parliament on Antisemitism. On 18 January, the German parliament voted to establish the position of Antisemitism Commissioner, which is the first recommendation of the report. We continue to cooperate with Germany in international work to combat antisemitism.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-18/123639/>

*The report referred to above can be read (in German) at*

<https://european-forum-on-antisemitism.org/file/114/download?token=M2GwOcby>

#### Hezbollah

**Paul Girvan (DUP)** [123859] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to prevent the promotion of the military wing of Hezbollah in the UK.

**Ben Wallace:** Hizballah's External Security Organisation was proscribed in March 2001 and in 2008 the proscription was extended to Hizballah's military apparatus including the Jihad Council.

Proscription means that an organisation is outlawed and is unable to operate in the UK. It is a criminal offence for a person to:

- belong to or invite support for a proscribed organisation;
- arrange a meeting in support of a proscribed organisation;
- wear clothing or carry articles in public which arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of the proscribed organisation.

The penalties for proscription offences can be a maximum of 10 years in prison and/or an unlimited fine.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-19/123859/>

## Religious Freedom

**Justin Tomlinson (Conservative)** [122916] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to tackle faith-based persecution overseas; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Field:** The protection of the right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a priority of Her Majesty's Government's foreign policy and will continue to be so. In their interactions with foreign governments, Foreign and Commonwealth Office ministers and officials routinely raise individual cases and highlight practices and laws that discriminate against people on the basis of their religion or belief.

The United Kingdom also actively promotes FoRB through multilateral diplomacy. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) minister with responsibility for human rights, Lord Ahmad, stressed the importance of working to defend the right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) when he addressed the UN Human Rights Council in September 2017.

The FCO is also supporting a number of projects to promote tolerance through the Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy. Current projects include work to support human rights defenders in South and Central Asia.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-16/122916/>

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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>

Joint Committee on Human Rights report: Legislative Scrutiny: The EU (Withdrawal) Bill: A Right by Right Analysis

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201719/jtselect/jtrights/774/774.pdf>

#### **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>

Stage 1 debate

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11325&i=103079#ScotParlOR>

Motion agreed

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11325&i=103081&c=2058651#ScotParlOR>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 3 days**

**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>

**\*\* Human Rights (Scottish Parliament)** (closing date 16 March 2018)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/106453.aspx>

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