

# Political Affairs Digest

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

## Contents

Home Affairs  
 Holocaust  
 Israel

Relevant Legislation  
 Consultations

## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Prime Minister's Questions

**Q3. Rehman Chishti (Conservative):** While I have been travelling around the country to meet people from diverse communities, members of the Jewish and the Muslim communities have raised the point that the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 should specifically take into account people's faith considerations, because in their faiths, loved ones must be buried within 24 hours. Will the Prime Minister join me, my hon. Friend the Member for Maidstone and The Weald (Mrs Grant) and faith communities in looking at this very important matter?[903808]

**The Prime Minister:** I thank my hon. Friend for raising that point on behalf of communities across the country, which he does from the unique position of his own experience and understanding of these issues. It is important that we take account of specific requirements of someone's faith, especially when they have lost a loved one and are grieving. Although, as he will be aware, coroners are independent judicial office holders, I understand that the Ministry of Justice is speaking to the Chief Coroner about this point to see what more can be done. I am sure that my right hon. Friend the Lord Chancellor will be happy to meet my hon. Friend to discuss the issue further.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-07/debates/B3EF2D42-D1CF-4293-BCB1-FE3086EB84AD/Engagements#contribution-546BE669-11CA-4D60-ACCB-620C0FCDCE4A>

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Post-mortems

**Sarah Wollaston (Conservative)** [125447] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to collect centrally data on waiting times for coronial post mortems for (a) adults, (b) children and (c) neonatal deaths.

**Phillip Lee:** The Ministry of Justice collects data on the number of post mortem examinations commissioned by coroners and this is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coroners-statistics-2016>

We have no plans to collect data on waiting times for coroner post mortems.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125447/>

## House of Lords Oral Answers

### Abattoirs: Ritual Slaughter

**Lord Trees (Crossbench):** To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to minimise the number of animals slaughtered without stunning in abattoirs in the United Kingdom.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Gardiner of Kimble):** My Lords, EU and domestic legislation require all animals to be stunned before slaughter, with a long-standing exception for Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs. We recently asked the Food Standards Agency to conduct a survey of slaughterhouses that included looking at different slaughter methods. The survey's results should help to ascertain the volumes of meat arising from different slaughter methods.

**Lord Trees:** I thank the Minister for his reply and congratulate the Government on the number of measures they have announced recently to improve animal welfare in this country. They are progressive and very welcome. However, on non-stunned slaughter, I am afraid we have not made much progress. The latest Food Standards Agency figures to which the noble Lord alluded show that the number of sheep slaughtered without stunning in Britain in 2017 doubled in the six years from 2011 to over 3 million sheep. That is 3 million sheep that had their throats cut without being rendered unconscious first. Does the Minister agree that, in that aspect of animal welfare, we are going backwards?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, that is why it is important that we first look at the results of the 2018 survey. The last full survey was in 2013, so it is important that we hear about the issue again. The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, but we have been very clear over a long period—since the 1933 Act—that we respect the rights of the Jewish and Muslim communities to consume meat in accordance with their religious practices. However, we expect our announcement on CCTV, affecting all slaughterhouses, to be an advance in animal welfare.

**Lord Rooker (Labour):** Does the Minister realise that there is a partial solution to this, particularly in respect of the Muslim community? All New Zealand lamb that arrives in this country is halal and all the animals were stunned prior to slaughter. If it is good enough to have a standard in New Zealand that classifies as halal, why do we put up with a local decision, which is not an international rule? There is a perfectly good arrangement from the other side of the world, which has led so much in food safety and farming practices. Why can we not adopt the New Zealand practices in respect of the Muslim community?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, my understanding is that there are different requirements in different parts of the Muslim community. The noble Lord, with all his experience, is absolutely right, but certain parts of the Muslim community are prepared to have stunned halal meat and other parts are not. I return to the fact that we have this long-standing reasoning behind permitting the communities to eat meat in that way. We certainly want to enhance animal welfare, and that is why the official veterinarians must be in every part of the slaughterhouse.

**Viscount Hailsham (Conservative):** My Lords, may I support the position adopted by my noble friend? It is very important to carry the Muslim and Jewish communities with us and I hope they will be tightly involved in any consultations that may take place.

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, as I say, we do not intend to move away from this long-standing right, but we want, with the other measures that we are considering, to ensure that all slaughtermen hold a certificate of competence, which is clearly essential, and that the official veterinarians can see from the video footage that everything done in all slaughterhouses is carried out in a proper manner. We certainly want to advance animal welfare in all slaughterhouses.

**Lord Stoneham of Droxford (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, the growth figures that the

noble Lord, Lord Trees, talked about are in excess of what is needed to meet religious needs for the slaughtering of animals without stunning. We have been leaders in the European Union on animal welfare, so have the Government looked at the German system of quotas as a way of bringing the numbers down, and if not, why not?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, we should get the figures in March and we will want to look at the survey, which will be put in the public domain at some point this year. It is also important to say that we want to see what proportion of this meat is going for export. We want to look at where the livestock is sourced and the market distribution, including exports. Once we know that, we will be in a position to give this issue the consideration it deserves.

**Lord Cunningham of Felling (Labour):** My Lords, is it not the case, as the noble Lord, Lord Trees, accurately pointed out, that the number of animals, in this case sheep, being killed without stunning is rising dramatically? I am sure that is not mirrored by a rise in the population who demand halal meat. What is the Minister's explanation for the number of animals having risen so sharply in the UK?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The noble Lord has raised a number of points. I understand that people in the Muslim community eat more sheepmeat than the rest of the British population and that the number of Muslims who are looking to have non-stunned halal meat has also increased because of enhanced religious observance. As I say, with this survey we want to look at the reasons behind this. Obviously, our intention is to allow an exemption for religious communities, but not that this meat should go into the wider market.

**Baroness Masham of Ilton (Crossbench):** My Lords, is the Minister aware of the horrifically cruel treatment of sheep in a slaughterhouse near Thirsk? The animals were not stunned, rather they were kicked and mutilated; what they went through is really horrifying. The men involved will be tried in court in Leeds very soon. Can the Minister say when CCTV will be operational in all slaughterhouses?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, we intend to lay legislation on this matter very shortly. I wish I could give the noble Baroness and the House a precise date, but we want to bring it forward as soon as possible. CCTV will be installed in all areas where live animals are present. We want animals to have a good life and a respectful end to their lives. I think this will advance that.

**Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts (Conservative):** My Lords, of course we must wholeheartedly and unreservedly respect freedom of religious belief, but there are among us those who would prefer not to eat meat that has been slaughtered using a mechanism that we believe causes unnecessary suffering. Will the Government now grasp this nettle and arrange for a labelling mechanism so that those of us who do not believe in following this practice have the freedom of our own belief?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, the labelling issue is very important. We think it is absolutely essential that everyone can make an informed choice. We will be considering this issue in the context of our departure from the EU. I also say to my noble friend that farm assurance schemes, such as Red Tractor and the RSPCA Assured scheme, require stunned slaughter. That is an important feature.

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch (Labour):** My Lords, we all welcome the introduction of compulsory CCTV in slaughterhouses, which should assist with proper welfare standards. The noble Lord will know, however, that the recent incident at 2 Sisters came to light not because of the CCTV but because of undercover reporters. Unless the Food Standards Agency has the proper resources to look at the footage, we will get no further forward. Will the Minister explain what extra resources will be put in place so that the CCTV footage is used and not just sitting there in a dead camera?

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** My Lords, it is very important that the official veterinarian takes his or her duties extremely seriously. That is why the footage will need to be stored by the slaughterhouse operators for 90 days. The official veterinarians will have access to the CCTV systems and their recorded images. It is important that CCTV recording may be used as evidence. On resources, the

official veterinarians, who are essential to this, have their duties. There have to be official veterinarians in slaughterhouses. As I said, this will be an important part of the work of enhancing animal welfare at the end of animals' lives.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-02-07/debates/F6F1A838-A275-4205-A2C9-EFBE097F63AE/AbattoirsRitualSlaughter>

TOP

## Holocaust

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

**John Mann (Labour)** [123640] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which Departments have (a) marked and (b) plans to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2018.

**Heather Wheeler:** In 2018, more departments than ever before held events to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. These include:

- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
- Cabinet Office
- Ministry of Defence
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- Department for Education
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department for Exiting the European Union
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Home Office
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Department for International Development
- Department for International Trade
- Ministry of Justice
- Northern Ireland Office
- Department for Transport
- HM Treasury

Officials in all other departments have been invited to attend these events, or given opportunities to view them remotely. A number of non-Ministerial departments have also held events or their staff have been able to attend those held at Ministerial departments; these include (but are not limited to) the Government Legal Department, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Charity Commission.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-18/123640/>

### Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-10373: Neil Findlay (Labour): The Power of Words on Holocaust Memorial Day** – That the Parliament notes that school pupils from West Lothian joined one of many worldwide events at Howden Park to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2018; understands that documentary films were shown and stories were read out that conveyed the hardships of the people persecuted; notes that the theme for this year's event was the Power of Words, focusing on the impact of language in inciting hatred, recording events and

empowering resistance, and recognises that it is the responsibility of everyone to use their words to create tolerant, diverse and peaceful societies in which the atrocities of the Holocaust can never happen again.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10373>

TOP

## Israel

### Westminster Hall Debate

#### **Palestinian Children and Israeli Military Detention**

*col 580WH Sarah Champion (Labour):* ... I strongly welcome the fact that the Government addressed the issue of Palestinian child detainees during the third universal periodical review of Israel at the UN Human Rights Council two weeks ago. They recommended that Israel take “action to protect child detainees, ensuring the mandatory use of audio-visual recording in interrogations with all child detainees, ending the use of painful restraints, and consistently fully informing detainees of their legal rights.”

That important statement signals a positive intent to engage constructively with this issue. ...

To be clear, I am not making a judgment about the crimes Palestinian children are alleged to have committed or about Israel’s right to uphold the law. This debate is specifically focused on Palestinian children in military detention. ...

*col 581WH* Last year, the authoritative west bank non-governmental organisation Military Court Watch found that, four years after the publication of the UNICEF report [“Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations”], only one of its 88 recommendations—No. 21, on access by lawyers to medical records—had been substantially implemented.

**Paula Sherriff (Labour):** Military Court Watch reported that 79% of children detained in 2017 signed a confession or a statement in Hebrew. Does my hon. Friend share my concern that the majority of those children would not have had a guardian or responsible adult with them, and that they probably would not have understood the language they were committing to?

**Sarah Champion:** I share my hon. Friend’s concern, and I will address that point. Arabic is an official language in the state of Israel, so why are the documents presented to children in Hebrew?

A year before the UNICEF report, a group of senior UK lawyers published an independent study entitled “Children in Military Custody”. Published in 2012 and funded by the Government, it found that Israel was in breach of at least eight of its international legal obligations under the UN convention on the rights of the child and the fourth Geneva convention, due to its treatment of Palestinian children held in military detention.

**Imran Hussain (Labour):** I thank my hon. Friend for securing this very important debate. As she knows, Palestinian children as young as 12 are routinely taken from their homes in night-time raids, blindfolded, bound, shackled, interrogated without a lawyer or parent present and with no audio-visual recordings, put into solitary confinement and forced to sign confessions. These are children we are talking about. What part of that is not plainly and simply wrong? ...

*col 582WH Andy Slaughter (Labour):* ... Does my hon. Friend agree that, in one respect, things have got worse since our last debate, because Israel has started using administrative detention—detention without charge for unlimited periods? ...

**Sarah Champion:** Yes. That technique is not used often, but it is used. It allows the child to be held in detention without any charges being brought against them, and without

their having the right to respond to the charges.

The prevalent practice of night-time raids by Israeli military personnel causes a huge amount of distress to children and their families. ...

... it was most welcome that Israel announced the introduction of a pilot scheme in February 2014, whereby summonses would be issued requiring attendance at police stations for questioning, in lieu of arresting a child at night. That was to be similar to the practice for Israeli children. Military Court Watch reports, however, that the use of summonses in lieu of night arrest has been very low. It found that 6% of the children affected in 2017 reported being served with a summons as an alternative to a night arrest; in 2016 the figure was just 2%.

*col 583WH* Even in cases in which summonses are used ... in most cases, the summonses were delivered by the military after midnight; relevant parts of the summonses were frequently handwritten in Hebrew without Arabic translation; relevant information, such as the nature of the accusation, was missing; and no reference to the child's legal rights was included in any of the summonses. ...

... the right to silence is an ancient and fundamental legal right, granting protection against self-incrimination. Significantly, that right is also enshrined in Israeli military law.

... Military Court Watch notes that 84% of children continue to report not being informed of their right to silence. ...

*col 584WH* **Martin Whitfield (Labour):** ... Under the civilian code that applies for Israeli children, there is a requirement for a parent to be in attendance during interrogation, and an undertaking that interrogations not occur at night, but the same is not reflected in the military rules. Is it not a great shame that those rules could not be matched up? ...

**Sarah Champion:** ... I ... ask the Minister to engage with the Israeli authorities to ensure, as a bare minimum, that: first, all children are, at the time of arrest, informed in their own language of their right to silence, and relevant documents are provided to them in that language; secondly, all children are able to consult a lawyer of their choice before their interrogation and, preferably, also during interrogation; and, thirdly, in order to ensure compliance, a breach of those principles results in the discontinuance of the prosecution and the child's immediate release. ...

*col 585WH* An expert psychiatric opinion from Dr Carmon, commissioned by Physicians for Human Rights Israel, considered the emotional and developmental factors that lead children to make false confessions during interrogations. ... Dr Carmon says: "... These methods deeply undermine the dignity and personality of the child or adolescent, and inflict pain and severe mental suffering. Uncertainty and helplessness are situations that can too easily lead a child or adolescent to provide the requested confession out of impulsiveness, fear or submission. ..."

**Desmond Swayne (Conservative):** A retired Israeli soldier told me that the explicit instructions for night operations were to carry them out in such a brutal manner as to achieve exactly the effect that the hon. Lady refers to. ...

*col 586WH* **Afzal Khan (Labour):** ... would it not be appropriate for our Government to demand an independent inquiry from the Israeli Government into what is going on? That would help everyone.

**Sarah Champion:** The reality is that we are not in a position to demand. The purpose of this debate is to reach out a hand of friendship and to offer the skills and expertise that we have in this country on this topic, to work in partnership with Israel. ...

As a bare minimum of protection, I urge the Minister to make representations to ensure that no child is subjected to physical or psychological violence, no child is blindfolded or painfully restrained, and no child is subject to coercive forces and threats. ...

*col 587WH* I am sure everyone is aware of the case of Ahed Tamimi, a now 17-year-old girl from the west bank village of Nabi Saleh. In December, she was arrested in the middle of the night after being filmed confronting and slapping Israeli soldiers in her village following the shooting of her 14-year-old cousin. Like all Palestinian female prisoners, Ahed has been transferred to a prison in Israel. The case is polarising: on the

one hand, there are those calling for her immediate release; on the other, Israel's minister for education calls for the military courts to impose a life sentence.

It is important that we all recall that Ahd is just one of more than 800 children arrested each year, according to the most recent data released by the military authorities. Most of these children are arrested in the middle of the night, frequently brutalised and systematically denied their legal rights. We need these children and their parents to have faith and confidence in a political solution and in due regard for the law. History has taught us that if politics and the law fail to meet the needs of the people, people turn to other solutions. ...

*col 588WH* **John Howell (Conservative):** ... Let me start by giving some background. In 2011, in the face of riots, more than 3,000 arrests were made and more than 1,000 people were issued with criminal charges. Around half were under 21, and 26% were juveniles aged between 10 and 17. Some 21% were arrested for bottle or stone throwing. One hundred and fifty-eight male youths aged 16 or under were given custodial sentences. That is not a description of Israel; it is a description of the UK following the 2011 riots. Why has there been no Westminster Hall debate on the treatment of minors by the Palestinian authorities, the allegations of rape in Egyptian custody or the death sentences imposed on minors in Saudi Arabia? ...

The singling out of Israel ignores the fact that Israel faces extensive acts of terror on its territory. It ignores the fact that Israel has established military juvenile courts, shortened the period of initial remand, stressed the rights of minors, raised the age of minority to 18, enacted a statute of limitations for the prosecution of minors, given parents legal standing and strengthened legal representation for minors. It also ignores the co-operation of Israel in the light of the 2012 Foreign and Commonwealth Office-funded report. ...

*col 589WH* If Israel were to use civil courts instead of a military one, it would be accused of simply annexing the west bank. ...

... we must recognise that 30% of attackers against Israel—fuelled by intimidation that denies Israel the right to exist and glorifies terrorists and Nazi sympathisers—have been Palestinian minors under the age of 18. The majority were between 16 and 18. The youngest was an 11-year-old, who said after being arrested for stabbing an Israeli that he wanted to die a martyr. ...

The use of minors in this way, driven by hate and incitement, is nothing more than the abuse of children. ...

*col 590WH* **Ross Thomson (Conservative):** ... believe in human rights for all people around the world, and Palestinian children are no exception. Israeli authorities, be they military or civilian, have a duty to uphold those human rights and to ensure that their justice system is fair and proportionate. ...

However, we should be careful not to fall into the trap of accepting the simplistic narrative of anti-Israel propagandists. This complex issue cannot be solved with a round of Israel bashing. The Palestinian Authority rules over a society where it is easy for a child to be led into accepting terrorist ideology. The Palestinian Authority—not Hamas, but the so-called moderates in the Palestinian Authority—name schools after terrorists, give them honours and pay them monthly salaries. At the same time, they delegitimise the existence of the state of Israel and the Jewish presence in the region, and deny the Jewish connection to much of the region's history. ...

If we criticise Israel, we must also criticise the Palestinian Authority, whose security forces' record with children leaves a lot to be desired. In that region alone, we must also criticise Saudi Arabia for executing children, Iran for executing people who were arrested when they were children, and Egypt for—according to Human Rights Watch—allegedly torturing children. ...

*col 591WH* **Kate Hollern (Labour):** ... Even if we argue that 16 to 17-year-olds are not children, which is incorrect, we must accept that any form of human rights abuse is abhorrent and should not be condoned in any way. Most Palestinian minors arrested by Israel claim to have experienced physical violence during detention. ...

Some 75% of children were subject to physical abuse, 25% were denied adequate food and 100% were denied the right to have their families at their interrogation. ...

**col 592WH Joanna Cherry (SNP):** ... we observed the trial of a young Palestinian man for allegedly throwing stones at a settler car. The man's interrogator, who the defendant claimed had assaulted him during interrogation, was in court as a witness, with his gun casually slung in the back pocket of his jeans. It was claimed that the interrogation was conducted in Arabic and that alongside the statement an audio recording was taken. However, the audio recording was nowhere to be found, and the level of the interrogator's Arabic was revealed to be insufficient to be able to obtain and record a fair and accurate statement. The only transcript of the interview was in Hebrew. In a fair trial in a democracy that respects the rule of law, that case would have been thrown out. It was not, and that is the gravamen of the issue here.

The issue is not about military law, because sadly the west bank is under a hostile occupation, and occupations require military law—although they are meant to be temporary, and this one has lasted 50 years. However, having military courts is no excuse for disregarding the proper rules of justice and legal safeguards, particularly for children, but also for adults. ...

**col 593WH Andrew Percy (Conservative):** ... We must tackle the issue of Palestinian incitement as part of the debate, and the same goes for the lack of engagement from the west bank authorities for non-custodial sentences. ... I am proud to take a pro-Israel position. I am not anti-Palestinian—I consider myself to be pro-both—but those of us who take a more nuanced view on Israel should also talk about what we can do as parliamentarians, using our aid budget and all the rest of it, to bring people together, because that is the best way to bring an end to the conflict. ...

**Joan Ryan (Labour):** ... The detention and trial of a child is a tragedy whenever it occurs. However, I am concerned that this debate is symptomatic of the disproportionate and unfair focus on Israel that is all too prevalent in the media, international institutions and this House. ... However, we have not debated the fate, for instance, of child prisoners in Iran, where Amnesty International estimates there are at least 80 individuals on death row for crimes allegedly committed when they were under 18, or indeed the fate of others in Egypt, the Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Yemen, which have all sentenced juvenile offenders to death since 2010. Israel is, of course, a liberal democracy, and should be held to a higher standard than the likes of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. We have also never discussed the fate of the 60,000 children locked up in juvenile detention facilities in the United States—many for truancy, under-age drinking or consensual sexual conduct—or the fact that, adjusted for size of population, 5.5 times more minors were arrested in 2015-16 in England and Wales than in the west bank by Israel. ...

**col 594WH** We must register our deep and continuing concern at the Palestinian leadership's attempt to recruit children into committing acts of violence. In December Fatah posted a photograph to its Twitter account of a young boy hurling rocks with a slingshot, together with a guide to how best to throw a rock. Let us remember that Yehuda Haim Shoham, one year-old Jonathan Palmer and three-year-old Adele Biton were all killed as a result of stones being thrown at cars they were travelling in. ...

**Matthew Offord (Conservative)** ... The hon. Member for Rotherham (Sarah Champion) raised the case of 17-year-old Ahed Tamimi. We all know what has happened to her now that she has been imprisoned, but I wonder whether hon. Members know what she said on Facebook straight after slapping an Israeli soldier. Out of earshot of the soldier, Ahed turned to the camera and said in Arabic: "I wish that everybody all over the world would unite, so we can liberate Palestine...Be it stabbings, martyrdom-seeking operations, throwing stones, everyone must do his part and we must unite in order for our message to be heard that we want to liberate Palestine".

I know what "martyrdom-seeking operations" means, and I am sure many other hon. Members do; that is why she was charged with inciting violence on social media. ...

col 595WH There is a judiciary in Israel, and it is better for politicians in this country, and indeed in Israel, not to involve themselves in the judicial process. As has already been stated, there have been occasions when cases were thrown out because the evidence was not there. We must leave Israel to decide its own future, live in peace and security, and have its own laws of the land. We do not need hon. Members who are taking part in this debate to tell Israel how to live its life. ...

**Paul Blomfield (Labour):** ... Nabi Saleh, an ancient village nestling among the citrus groves on the hillside north of Ramallah, dates back hundreds of years. It was recently joined by the illegal Israeli settlement of Halamish, which has taken much of its land. Someone standing in Nabi Saleh can look across the valley to Halamish on the neighbouring hilltop and begin to understand the sense of grievance. Halamish is well irrigated, with swimming pools and a proper water supply, which come at a cost to the people of Nabi Saleh, whose water has been rationed to a few hours a week. At the bottom of the valley is a spring, which has traditionally served Nabi Saleh, but which was requisitioned by the settlement. That has led to weekly protests by the villagers over the past four years.

Last December, during a protest, Ahed's cousin Mohammed climbed a ladder to look over a wall. A soldier immediately took aim and a bullet passed through Mohammed's head. When the same soldier turned up in the courtyard of her home on a night raid at 3.30 am on 19 December, Ahed and a cousin went out and shouted at them. The BBC broadcast a film of the incident last week on the main news. The soldier pushed her aside, and in retaliation Ahed slapped him. It was for that that she was arrested and charged with assault. She has been in jail ever since—for the past seven weeks. She was 16 at the time of her arrest. She marked her birthday in jail and is now 17. Yesterday the case was due in court. It was postponed again and will be heard next Tuesday, so now is the time to act. ...

col 596WH **Louise Ellman (Labour Co-op)** ... the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be resolved only by direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians—not by the Palestinian Authority's incitement of young people to hate and kill, as is happening on the west bank today. ...

Such violence has been encouraged by the Palestinian leadership, in direct contravention of the Geneva convention, which specifically prohibits the recruitment and involvement of children in terrorist activities. Fatah recently tweeted a practical guide to show young people how to throw rocks, which were euphemistically called "stones". That has resulted in the murder of young people, including Yehuda Haim Shoham, aged five months. ...

... the Palestinian youth magazine, *Zayzafuna*, claimed that Mohammed sanctified the throwing of rocks at Jews. Terrorists are glorified. A recent report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education—IMPACT-se—shows schoolbooks that glorify violence and martyrdom. The Palestinian Authority's rewritten 2017 curriculum teaches children about its support for people who carry out terrorist attacks. In May 2015, a PA TV programme, "The Best Home", showed a girl who recited a poem that called Jews "barbaric monkeys who murdered Allah's pious prophets."

If young people are continually told that murderous terrorists are heroes, it is not surprising that they try to emulate them. Nobody can be content with the current situation, and all individual allegations of any injustice must be investigated. However, the answer is to negotiate peace, not to glorify hatred and violence by telling young people and children that murdering Israelis is justified resistance. ...

col 597WH **Marsha De Cordova (Labour):** ... If an Israeli settler is arrested, they will be tried under Israeli civilian criminal law; if a Palestinian is arrested, they are tried in a separate military court. Access to justice is segregated. A child's nationality and ethnicity determine the type of justice that they receive under Israel's occupation. After sentencing, nearly 60% of Palestinian child detainees are transferred from the occupied territories to the prisons of Israel, in violation of the fourth Geneva convention. That

means that most will be unable to receive family visits, due to the freedom of movement restrictions placed on Palestinians and the long time that it takes to issue a visiting permit. ...

... one thing become clear: this system is designed to repress, crush and intimidate generation after generation of Palestinians. ...

*col 598WH* **Patrick Grady (SNP):** ... The SNP condemns the arrest, detention and prosecution of Palestinian children by the Israeli Government, and we are deeply concerned about the increase in the number of children who have been detained as a result of the escalation of tensions in the territory. ...

... the specific case of Ahd Tamimi ... involves well-resourced, heavily armed and armoured soldiers on one hand, and, on the other hand a young, unarmed girl who is causing a bit of a nuisance and slapping those soldiers about. ... a relatively minor incident has spiralled into something much bigger and triggered many further consequences and polarised perspectives.

*col 599WH* Amnesty International, and others, are clear that the treatment of Ahd does not respect her human rights or fulfil Israel's obligations under the UNCRC. Indeed, Amnesty says that nothing she has done can justify her continued detention ... [The Government should] guarantee that UK funds will not support the military detention, interrogation, abuse or ill-treatment of Palestinian children. What dialogue are the Government having with the Government of Israel about how they intend to incorporate their obligations under the conventions into domestic law? ...

*col 601WH* **Fabian Hamilton (Labour):** ... The prospect of a two-state solution, which I am sure every Member in the Chamber supports, seems to be increasingly far off. ...

... there is a long-term problem in the increases in hostility between the Israel defence forces and Palestinian children under 18 years old. When I was in Qalandiya in November with the shadow Foreign Secretary, we heard first hand from a 14-year-old girl who had been arrested for posting critical comments on Facebook, having witnessed her brother's arrest in the middle of the night. Those children are the future leaders of a Palestinian state. What future awaits people on both sides if they grow up to fear and despise their Israeli peers for the treatment they received? ...

*col 602WH* **The Minister for the Middle East (Alistair Burt):** ... Some very hard things have been said today. Colleagues speak for themselves and must justify their own words, but suffice it to say there is an element of truth in almost everything that has been said on both sides. ... We are talking about incitement, killing, the death of children and the loss of land—in short, the catalogue of despair and misery that has haunted these lands for much too long. We set all that in that context. ...

The UK strongly condemns the use of racist, hateful language that can stir up prejudice. We frequently press all sides on the need to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric. Israel and the Palestinian Authority need to prepare their populations for peaceful co-existence, including by promoting a more positive portrayal of each other. ...

Children are entitled to special protections and due process under international humanitarian law. Those protections are reaffirmed in the UN convention on the rights of the child, to which Israel is a state party. ...

*col 603WH* I do not stint in making very clear that Israel needs to live up to what is in conventions that it signs. ...

Israel has made some progress toward fulfilling those obligations. It has reduced the number of detainees aged between 12 and 14, increased the age of maturity from 16 to 18, established separate juvenile courts and enacted a special statute of limitations for minors. However, our assessment is that Israel is still falling short and needs to do more to safeguard vulnerable people in its care. ...

I raised our concerns during my visit to Israel last summer, and our ambassador in Tel Aviv raised the issue with the Israeli Justice Minister as recently as December. We have a regular dialogue with Israeli authorities on legal issues relating to the occupation, as

part of which we discuss the treatment of Palestinian children in military custody. ...

We are committed to helping the Israeli authorities to make the necessary changes. Last year, we invited them to attend expert discussions with the Metropolitan Police to share more than 30 years of UK experience of implementing regulations designed specifically to protect the rights of minors in detention. Do we have to arrest young people? Yes, we do, but it is all a question of how we do it and in what context. We were disappointed when our invitation was declined. ...

*col 604WH* Turning to Ahed Tamimi ... I recognise the description of the village that he gave. It is absolutely correct. From the village people can see the settlement on the other side, and see the water that is the source of distress and discontent in the area. ...

None of us was there to hear everything that was said. I know that remarks from Ms Tamimi, quoted on television in Arabic, have not been translated in a manner that her lawyer recognises, and we are not entirely sure of what was said, but the language is there. It is on television for people to hear. Her case is of concern to all of us here who know of it. ... I do not in any way wish to excuse Ms Tamimi's behaviour, but nor do I condone her treatment. As I said in the House, I believe that she should not have needed to do what she did, because the soldiers should not have been there. ...

I do not find it incompatible to believe passionately in the existence and the security of the state of Israel and in justice for the Palestinian people in lands I first visited 40 years ago, based on the efforts of peacemakers over the years. I also believe passionately that it is never too late, although it might soon be so. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-07/debates/59810ABD-1AC7-4546-9DFE-EDD380A4123C/PalestinianChildrenAndIsraeliMilitaryDetention>

*"Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations"*, referred to above, can be read at

[https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF\\_oPt\\_Children\\_in\\_Israeli\\_Military\\_Detention\\_Observations\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_-\\_6\\_March\\_2013.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf)

*"Children in Military Custody"*, referred to above, can be read at

[http://www.childreninmilitarycustody.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Children\\_in\\_Military\\_Custody\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.childreninmilitarycustody.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Children_in_Military_Custody_Full_Report.pdf)

TOP

## **Relevant Legislation**

\*\* new or updated today

### **UK Parliament**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Scottish Parliament

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

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

TOP

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**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>

TOP

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