

Political Affairs Digest

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

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House of Commons Point of Order

Robert Halfon (Conservative): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. Last night in the House of Lords, Lord Roberts said: “My mind went back to Berlin in March 1933 when the enabling Bill was passed in the Reichstag, which transferred the democratic right from the Parliament into the hands of one man—that was the Chancellor, and his name was Adolf Hitler.”—[[Official Report, House of Lords, 30 April 2018; Vol. 790, c. 1856.](#)]

As someone who is Jewish and very proud of our Parliament, I find those remarks absolutely disgusting. They are shameful for our country and for our Parliament, and completely unacceptable. Can you advise me of ways that this House can send a message to that peer that such trivialisation of evil is unacceptable and that he should withdraw those remarks?

Mr Speaker: I am very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his point of order, and I understand and respect, not least having known him for a quarter of a century, the strength of feeling that he has just articulated on the matter. I am sorry to have to say to him, but I do, that the Speaker of this House has no role in policing or overseeing utterances in the other place. I do not think it is for me formally to take the matter forward. However, the right hon. Gentleman received strong support from colleagues for what he said, and if he wishes to write to the noble Lord and to enclose a copy of what he has said in this Chamber, I think he will feel that he has done the right thing, and it may elicit a response. I think we should always speak with great care and sensitivity in either House, and I thank the right hon. Gentleman for what he said. We must now move on, because we have heavy business today.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-05-01/debates/8A0BCCBC-A0A8-4A64-BD24-087F49635908/PointOfOrder>

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House of Commons Written Answers

West Bank: Waste Disposal

Richard Burden (Labour) [137115] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and

Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the transfer of (a) urban and industrial by-products and (b) hazardous waste from Israel to the West Bank.

Alistair Burt: We have not made a recent assessment of this issue. The Government's broader concerns about the impact of the occupation, including the humanitarian and environmental effects, are well known to the Israeli authorities. We will continue to make representations on these matters.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-23/137115/>

Israel: Palestinians

David Drew (Labour Co-op) [138358] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his counterpart in Israel on allowing medical supplies from (a) Israel and (b) elsewhere to be delivered to Gaza.

Alistair Burt: Our Ambassador to Israel most recently raised medical permits and the importance of protestors receiving medical treatment with the Israeli authorities on 24 April. The UK supports the UN Access Coordination Unit, which works with the Israeli Government, the Palestinian Authority and aid agencies to facilitate the transfer of humanitarian goods including some medical equipment and supplies, into Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138358/>

UNRWA

David Drew (Labour Co-op) [137406] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what amount of funding the UK provided to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in (a) 2015, (b) 2016 and (c) 2017.

Alistair Burt: The amount of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in 2015 and 2016 is given in the table below. This data is published each year in the Statistics on International Development (SID) publication. Figures for 2017 will be released next year.

The UK is unequivocally committed to supporting Palestinian refugees across the region. Over the course of the 2017/18 financial year, the UK provided around £50 million to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), assisting in their provision of essential services including basic education to around 500,000 children, health services for around 3 million Palestinian refugees and supporting Palestinian refugees from Syria.

(£ millions)	2015	2016
Bilateral ODA through Multilateral	30	21
Core Multilateral ODA	34	33.4
Total UK ODA to UNRWA	64	54.4

Source: Statistics for International Development 2013-2016

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. In this case, bilateral ODA through multilateral refers UK contributions to UNRWA's Emergency Appeals. Core multilateral ODA describes un-earmarked funds from the UK which are pooled with other donors' funding and disbursed as part of the core budget of the multilateral organisation, which is UNRWA's Programme Budget in this case.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-24/137406/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL6950] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take following the killing of unarmed demonstrators during recent protests in Gaza.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Minister for the Middle East, and I, have raised the use of force during the protests with the Israeli authorities, in particular the use of live ammunition which is of very deep concern. It is plain that Hamas and their operatives have been exploiting these protests for their own benefit, and we have been clear that Israel has the right to secure itself against Hamas and other terrorist groups. We continue to urge Israel to show restraint and the Palestinian leadership to ensure the protests are peaceful. There is a need to establish the facts, including why such a volume of live fire has been used and secondly what role Hamas has played in escalating and inciting violence. Given the importance of accountability, we are supportive of an independent and transparent investigation. We therefore welcome Israel's commitment to investigate the conduct of operations, and would urge that its findings be made public and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-16/HL6950/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL6951] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take following reports that members of the press in Gaza were either targeted by Israeli snipers or that shooting was indiscriminate, during recent protests.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of reports that the Israeli Defense Forces shot two journalists identified as Yasser Murtaja and Ahmed Abu Hassin, who were wearing PRESS identification. We continue to urge Israel to show restraint and the Palestinian leadership to ensure the protests are peaceful. Given the importance of accountability, we are supportive of an independent and transparent investigation. We therefore welcome Israel's commitment to investigate the conduct of operations, and would urge that its findings be made public and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-16/HL6951/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL6953] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding reports that 15 year old Hamed al-Masri was shot in the head by an Israeli Defence Force soldier.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not raised this specific issue, we continue to raise concerns with the Israeli authorities about the Israel Defense Forces' use of live fire. We urge all sides to show maximum constraints and prevent further loss of life.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-16/HL6953/>

Gaza: Israel

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7026] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 3 April (HC133854), what action they will take to protect the civilian population of Gaza against further violations of international law.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: I remain deeply concerned about the deaths and

injuries suffered during recent protests in Gaza. I have urged Israel to show restraint, and the Palestinians to ensure that future protests are peaceful. We call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. We press the parties to refrain from actions which make peace more difficult.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-17/HL7026/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-03-22/133854/>

West Bank: Travel Restrictions

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)[HL7027] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they are making to the government of Israel concerning reports that 18 Palestinians from the West Bank were recently prevented from travelling abroad via the al-Karameh crossing for "security reasons".

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, though we do remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-17/HL7027/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7028] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they are making to the government of Israel concerning reports that money was confiscated from Yasmin Eshtayyeh, a civil society worker, by the Israeli authorities without any right of appeal.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this specific issue.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-17/HL7028/>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

European Union (Withdrawal) Bill

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

Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.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>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Integrated Communities Strategy green paper (closing date 5 June 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper>

Measures to further improve the effectiveness of the fight against illegal content online (closing date 25 June 2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-measures-further-improve-effectiveness-fight-against-illegal-content-online_en

Home Education (closing date 2 July 2018)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/home-education-call-for-evidence-and-revised-dfe-a/>

Ecclesiastical exemption and guidance on scheduled monuments (closing date 13 July 2018)

<https://beta.gov.wales/ecclesiastical-exemption-and-guidance-scheduled-monuments>

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