

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 Written Answer

Hate Crime: Internet

Louise Haigh (Labour) [140163] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his Department's announcement of the new national online hate crime hub, published on 8 October 2017, how many FTE officers are employed at the hub; how many (a) crimes and (b) perpetrators of crimes the hub has identified; and how many referrals have been made to social media platforms as a result of the work of the hub since its inception.

Victoria Atkins: The new online hate crime hub went live in January. It is in the initial phase of operations, with 3 out of 4 specialist full-time staff now in post and undertaking training and developing key processes, which include the provision of monitoring data in due course. The dedicated staff are supported by management supervision from Greater Manchester Police and the National Police Chiefs' Council.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-01/140163/>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-new-national-online-hate-crime-hub>

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House of Commons Written Answers

Palestinians: International Assistance

Richard Burden (Labour) [139375] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department plans to fund the 2018 Occupied Palestinian Territory Humanitarian Fund administered by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Alistair Burt: We remain concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Our current humanitarian support includes £1.9 million via the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which is supporting up to 1 million Gazans by providing clean water and rehabilitating sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. We continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Gaza closely, including through contact with relevant UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian donors, and we continue to ensure that our programmes can be responsive to spikes in need.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-30/139375/>

Israel: Palestinians

Richard Burden (Labour) [139376] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 26 April to Question 137118, on Israel: Palestinians, whether any of the organisations she held direct conversations with were (a) Palestinian or (b) groups operating in (i) the West Bank or (ii) Gaza.

Alistair Burt: Officials engaged directly and indirectly with a wide range of NGOs that work with both Palestinian and Israeli society including organisations that are run by Palestinians and operate in the West Bank. The programme does not currently work in Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-30/139376/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-23/137118/>

Palestinians: Trade

Jo Stevens (Labour) [140143] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential humanitarian effect of ending restrictions on trade between Gaza and the West Bank by building a secure route through Israel.

Alistair Burt: It is clear that if restrictions on trade, movement and access between the West Bank and Gaza were eased via creation of a secure route between the two through Israel, humanitarian goods and personnel would be able to reach the intended beneficiaries in a more timely and cost-effective manner. Easing trade restrictions would help to ensure that humanitarian relief reaches those in need, helping to save lives and reduce suffering. More broadly, the benefits of increased trade flow would enhance Gaza's economy, and relieve the humanitarian situation by lifting the overall standard of living. An analysis by the World Bank shows that lifting restrictions on Gaza could lead to additional cumulative growth of approximately 32% by 2025. We continue to press Israel to ease restrictions on trade, movement and access in line with their legitimate security concerns, and urge Hamas to renounce violence and move towards the quartet principles; the UK is committed to the unimpeded movement of humanitarian goods and personnel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-01/140143/>

The analysis referred to above can be read at

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/515891504884716866/pdf/119657-WP-PUBLIC-on-Monday-1-PM-sept-11-AHLC-report-September-8.pdf>

Gaza: Borders

Jo Stevens (Labour) [140144] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential humanitarian effect of expanding the capacity of the Kerem Shalom goods crossing between Gaza and Israel.

Alistair Burt: Humanitarian agencies currently have to devote considerable time, resource, and effort to coordinating the passage of humanitarian goods and personnel through crossings between Israel and Gaza. Kerem Shalom is the only crossing for goods to enter and exit Gaza via Israel. In 2017 an average of 218 trucks a month were leaving Gaza into Israel, compared to a monthly average of 961 trucks between January and July in 2007. This severely constrains the economic development of Gaza, which contributes to the dire humanitarian situation. By operating Kerem Shalom at capacity, humanitarian and essential goods would be able to reach the intended beneficiaries in a more timely and cost-effective manner. This would expedite the delivery of humanitarian relief to those in need, helping to save lives and reduce suffering. The UK regularly raises the need to ease trade, movement and access restrictions with the Government of Israel, in line with their legitimate security concerns, and urges Egypt reopen the Rafah crossing.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-01/140144/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Chemical Weapons Convention

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL7164] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to seek to persuade the governments of Egypt, Israel, Palestine, North Korea and South Sudan, and other non-signatories, to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: 192 states are signatories to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). We are encouraging all those that are not signatories to ratify.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7164/>

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7191] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel following reports of the deportation of Ibtisam Obeid, a Palestinian woman from Jerusalem who has lived there with her husband and children for the past sixteen years.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, we are clear that Israel has legal obligations under the Fourth of the Geneva Convention of 1949 that prohibits the deportation of protected persons from the occupied territory. We discuss implementation of these obligations with the Government of Israel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7191/>

Israel: Hamas

Baroness tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7192] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the threat by a senior Israeli minister that the Israeli authorities will assassinate Hamas leaders.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are not aware of the specific threat referenced. To have the best chance of success, the Middle East Peace Process must be conducted in an atmosphere free from violence. We press the parties to refrain from actions which make peace more difficult. We have also been clear that Hamas must reject violence, recognise Israel and abide by previous agreements.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7192/>

Egypt: Gaza

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7193] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Egypt regarding the closing of the Rafah Crossing in both directions.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise the Rafah border crossing with the Egyptian Government. Most recently, our Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Cairo raised this with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12 April. We encourage Egypt to be as flexible as possible with regard to their plans for the Rafah border crossing.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7193/>

Israel: Bedouin

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7194] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding the threat of demolition by Israeli forces of the EU-funded school in the Bedouin community of Al Muntar.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, the Minister for the Middle East discussed the issue of demolitions with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 19 April.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7194/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7195] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding access for Palestinian historians to Israeli archives.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this specific issue. We continue to have concerns about the difficulties of access to Jerusalem for Palestinians from the West Bank, or for those residents of Jerusalem who live beyond the Separation Barrier. Through our Embassy in Tel Aviv we have lobbied the appropriate authorities on the issue of movement and access.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-04-23/HL7195/>

Government Whips Office

Letter from Baroness Stedman-Scott to Lord Hannay regarding United State's support for the people of Gaza as raised during an oral question on Gaza

[http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-0425/20180502_-_Baroness Stedman-Scott to Lord Hannay Gaza OQ.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-0425/20180502_-_Baroness_Stedman-Scott_to_Lord_Hannay_Gaza_OQ.pdf)

The question to which the letter relates can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-04-24/debates/81BAB3A0-8A43-4033-869E-7834975CB11F/Gaza#contribution-4F718CF8-5971-4622-ACA0-E645316621D9>

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Other Relevant Information

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

FRA antisemitism survey now open

Jewish people in 13 EU Member States can now participate in the Agency's second antisemitism survey. Building on the results from the first survey, it aims to further help the EU and its Member States formulate informed policy and legal responses to combat antisemitism. ...

It aims to capture Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of antisemitism. It asks respondents to describe antisemitic incidents which they have experienced such as hate crime, discrimination and harassment. It also seeks to cover antisemitic acts which affect the community as a whole such as vandalism or antisemitic comments online.

The [survey is interested in the views and experiences](#) of all people who consider themselves Jewish - this could be based on their religion, culture, upbringing, ethnicity, parentage or any other basis. They must be aged 16 years or over, and currently live in one of the 13 survey countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden or the United Kingdom.

To read the full press release see

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2018/fra-antisemitism-survey-now-open>

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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>

Report Stage, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-05-08/debates/A8AB0BD8-E2C2-499D-AE7B-B3A5B7B09D35/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-05-08/debates/A8AB0BD8-E2C2-499D-AE7B-B3A5B7B09D35/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

Scottish Parliament Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Report on Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/DPLR/2018/5/8/Supplementary-Legislative-Consent-Memorandum-for-the-European-Union--Withdrawal--Bill/DPLRS052018R21.pdf>

**** Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

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

Scottish Parliament Legislative Consent Memorandum agreed

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11514&i=104486&c=2090307#ScotParlOR>

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>

**** Antisemitism: Survey of European Jews** (closing date not stated)

<http://www.eurojews.eu/>

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