

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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Mike Kane (Labour) [143172] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Department's news story Drive to create more good school places for families published on 11 May 2018, whether funding for new voluntary aided schools will be allocated on the basis of there being (a) a need for additional schools places and (b) demand for additional places in faith schools, and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi: As set out in the government's response to the 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation, local authorities have a duty to plan and secure sufficient schools for their areas using their basic need funding, and by working with their partners, including providers of Church and other faith schools. In order for a proposal to qualify for funding under the scheme, applicants will need to demonstrate both a need for new school places, and to provide an assessment of demand for places at the school. We will be developing the detail of the scheme in the coming months.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-11/143172/>

The news story referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/drive-to-create-more-good-school-places-for-families>

Voluntary Schools: Capital Investment

Mike Kane (Labour) [143173] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Department's news story Drive to create more good school places for families published on 11 May 2018, what steps by voluntary aided schools would be seen by his Department as playing an active role in their community; and whether that is a condition of receiving funding to open new voluntary aided schools.

Nadhim Zahawi: Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other; by encouraging, through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. Our existing statutory guidance for decision-makers opening new maintained schools sets out that when considering a proposal to open a voluntary-aided school, the decision-maker must consider its impact on community cohesion. This will remain the case for new voluntary-aided

schools created using funding from the capital scheme, and we will develop the detail of the scheme over the coming months.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-11/143173/>

The news story referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/drive-to-create-more-good-school-places-for-families>

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Hate incidents and crimes in Northern Ireland, period ending 31 March 2018

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/2017-18/quarterly-hate-motivations-bulletin-period-ending-mar18.pdf>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Jim Shannon (DPUP) [141788] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications of recent violence in Israel and the West Bank for the peace process in that area.

Alistair Burt: We remain concerned about the violence in Israel and the West Bank. The UK firmly believes that, 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 rhetoric and actions which make the goal of peace harder to achieve. We call on all parties to act with restraint, reject violence, and work together to ensure calm and stability.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141788/>

Palestinians: Radicalism

Jim Shannon (DUP) [141789] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of trends in institutionalised radicalisation in the Palestinian Territories.

Alistair burt: I refer the Hon. Member to my written answer of 4 May 2018 (PQ 138445).

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141789/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138445/>

Alistair Burt: We strongly condemn all violence and all incitement to commit violence. We are deeply concerned by continued incitement against Israel in the Hamas-run media and education system. The glorification of terrorists as “martyrs” is a barrier to peace. But President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to non-violence and a negotiated two-state solution. It is important that the Palestinian leadership continue efforts to fully implement the recommendations of the Quartet Report regarding incitement.

Israel: Gaza

Jim Shannon (DUP) [141790] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on recent renewed cross-border tunnel construction from Gaza into Israel.

Alistair Burt: We remain deeply concerned by Hamas' attempts to re-arm and rebuild militant infrastructure, including the tunnel network, in Gaza. Hamas' rearmament undermines efforts to improve the situation in Gaza and harms the prospects for peace and stability in the Middle East.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141790/>

Hezbollah: Weapons

Jim Shannon (DUP) [141791] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the size of Hezbollah's weapons arsenal.

Alistair Burt: We remain concerned by reports that Hizballah continues to amass an arsenal of weapons in Lebanon. We condemn the threat that this poses to regional stability and the direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions 1559 and 1701.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141791/>

Trade Agreements: Israel

Jim Shannon(DUP) [141792] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what opportunities he has identified for further trade cooperation with Israel once the UK is no longer party to the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Greg Hands: As we leave the European Union, we are seeking to replicate our existing EU free trade agreements and other EU preferential arrangements, so as to ensure continuity in our trade and investment relationships with third countries. The Prime Minister met the Israeli Prime Minister in February 2017 and agreed to establish a joint trade working group. In March 2017, my noble friend, the then Minister of State for Trade Policy (Lord Price CVO), visited Israel to chair the first meeting of the working group, which is continuing to make positive progress towards ensuring a smooth transition.

The UK and Israel have an important trading relationship, which we are committed to strengthening through our dedicated trade promotion team at our Embassy in Israel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141792/>

Israel Defense Forces: British Nationals Abroad

David Linden (SNP) [141883] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the number of British citizens who are serving in the Israeli Defence Force.

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has no information on the number of British citizens serving in the Israel Defence Forces.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141883/>

Omar Shakir

Richard Burden (Labour) [143114] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the deportation order against Omar Shakir the Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch; and if he will make a statement.

Alistair Burt: We have not raised this issue. It is for the Government of Israel to

decide its immigration policy. The UK's immigration policies and controls are similarly protected.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-11/143114/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7486] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK diplomatic staff will (1) attend, and (2) monitor, the case due to be held before the Israeli Supreme Court on 3 June that will hear petitions against Israel's Settlements Regularisation Law; and if so, who.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the case coming before the Israeli Supreme Court on 3 June, and our Embassy in Tel Aviv is monitoring developments closely. We remain in close contact with those involved in the petition and have made our concerns clear to the Israeli authorities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-05-01/HL7486/>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7487] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel, and what public statements they have made to international fora, concerning the legality of both settlements and outposts in international law, and Israel's obligations regarding settlement activity as set out in UN Security Resolution 2334.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's position on settlements and settlement outposts is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. That is why we supported UN Security Council Resolution 2334. We regularly raise our grave concerns on this issue with the Government of Israel, and reiterate our strong opposition to settlement activity in international fora. At the UN Security Council in February we called on Israel to immediately reverse its policy of settlement expansion.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-05-01/HL7487/>

United Nations

UNICEF delivers medical supplies to Gaza in wake of deadly protests

The drugs and medical equipment delivered by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and partners, include antibiotics, saline solution and syringes to treat an estimated 70,000 people.

Over the past six weeks, Palestinians have been demonstrating against the decade-long blockade on Gaza, but Monday's protests were the deadliest with nearly 60 killed and more than 1,300 injured.

UNICEF reported that medical facilities there are "[buckling under the strain](#)" of dealing with the additional casualties as the health system was already weakened due to shortages of fuel, medicine and equipment.

The agency added that the intensifying violence in Gaza has also worsened the plight of children "whose lives have already been unbearably difficult for many years".

UNICEF said more than 1,000 children have been injured in violence since the start of the protests, and "many of these injuries are severe and potentially life-altering, including

amputations”.

“Children should be protected, not targeted, used in violence or put in risky situations,” said the agency, and called on all actors within the occupied territories “to put in place specific measures to keep children out of harm’s way and avoid child casualties”.

Half of all children depend on humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip, and one in four, need psychosocial care. Families receive four to five hours of electricity each day and 90 per cent have no direct access to clean water.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/05/1009882>

Leading Palestinian legislator calls for ‘new international engagement’ in two-state solution

In an interview with *UN News*, Hanan Ashrawi, an Executive Committee Member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, described the deaths and injuries of Palestinians at the Gaza border on Monday as a “massacre” ...

Following the United States decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem this week – and act which she described as “becoming complicit in the occupation” – she said Palestinians “want a new multilateral mechanism; we want a new international engagement.” ...

“The US certainly has joined Israel as a partner in crime. It has joined Israel in violating international law and the resolutions of the Security Council on Jerusalem ...

Asked if a two-state solution with both countries living side-by-side in peace, was still possible, Ms. Ashrawi said: “This is very much in doubt, it’s very questionable. Unless there is the will to engage, to intervene effectively – not just to end settlement activities but to begin to dismantle settlements – Israel will have succeeded in super-imposing Greater Israel on all of historical Palestine.”

Asked for her view on calls from senior UN officials for Hamas in Gaza to stop inciting any violence at the border, she said the militant group was being used as a “convenient scapegoat” to deflect blame and accountability away from Israel.

“It is not Hamas who is responsible for the killing fields that Israel has carried out in Gaza. The people who are on this march to return; these unarmed civilian protests against the moving of the American embassy...these are expressions of will by the Palestinian people, who are protesting, demonstrating on their own lands”, she said, adding that “they are sending a message not just to Israel but to the rest of the world that we are a people who are alive and we want to live, and we want our freedom and we want our rights. This is not a sort of incitement or instigation by Hamas.”

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/05/1009942>

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Foreign Affairs

House of Lords Written Answer

UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7484] To ask Her Majesty's Government when the UK (1) signed, and (2) ratified, the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK signed the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on 11 October 1966 and ratified it on 7 March 1969.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-05-01/HL7484/>

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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>

House of Lords amendments

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0212/18212.pdf>

Bill as amended on Report

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2017-2019/0102/18102.pdf>

Explanatory Notes on Lords amendments

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0212/en/hcb212-en.pdf>

Third Reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-05-16/debates/98F7DF3F-ACE5-42E4-9FF6-F2BB1027EFA5/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-05-16/debates/98F7DF3F-ACE5-42E4-9FF6-F2BB1027EFA5/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

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>

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

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

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