

# Political Affairs Digest

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

## Contents

Home Affairs  
Israel

Other Relevant Information  
Relevant Legislation  
Consultations

## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Antisemitism

**Tom Pursglove (Conservative)** [905660] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, assessment he has made of recent trends in anti-semitic hate crime.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Government condemns all forms of hate crime including antisemitism. Nobody should be attacked because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability. In July 2016, we published Action Against Hate: The UK Government's Plan for Tackling Hate Crime, which we will be refreshing this year.

We work closely with the police and the Community Security Trust (CST), who are members of the Cross Government Working Group on Tackling Antisemitism, alongside other Jewish stakeholders. In their recent report, the CST recorded 1,382 antisemitic incidents reported across the UK in the 2017, a 3 per cent increase from the 1,346 incidents recorded during 2016.

Individual police forces collate and analyse intelligence on the number of antisemitic incidents, in order to inform local operational decisions and to provide adequate protection at times of demand. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) analyses this intelligence to inform forces of any emerging challenges.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-21/905660/>

### UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

#### Counter-terrorism

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid Javid):** [HCWS727] The Government's first priority is to keep families, communities and our country safe. Today, I have published an updated version of "CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism". The new strategy has been laid before Parliament as a Command Paper (Cm 9608), and copies are available in the Vote Office and on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

The threat from terrorism, globally and in the UK, is higher than when we last published "CONTEST" in 2011. The threat from Islamist terrorism, in particular that inspired by

Daesh and al-Qaeda, remains the most severe. Northern Ireland-related terrorism continues to pose a serious threat in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, and there is a growing threat from extreme right-wing terrorism. In 2016, we proscribed an extreme right-wing terrorist group, National Action, for the first time.

In 2017, we saw a significant shift in the terrorist threat to the UK. Five attacks in London and Manchester led to the deaths of 36 innocent people, and many more injured. We responded decisively, rapidly adapting our priorities and capabilities, to break the momentum of these attacks. Since March 2017, the police and the security and intelligence agencies successfully foiled a further 12 Islamist plots, and disrupted four extreme right-wing plots.

This strategy is the culmination of a detailed review of the UK's counter-terrorism arrangements, led by the Home Office. We have designed a new, more agile, flexible and co-ordinated approach to respond to the shifting nature of the threats we face, including terrorist exploitation of new technology, the increase in attacks in Europe, including the UK, as Daesh is forced into retreat in Syria and Iraq, and the speed with which people are being radicalised and plots developed. We will introduce new counter-terrorism legislation to disrupt terrorist threats in the UK earlier, taking account of the scale of the threat and the speed at which plots are now developing. We will share information more widely and support more local interventions with individuals in our own communities who are being groomed or incited to commit or support acts of terrorism. We are piloting multi-agency centres to do this in London, Manchester and the west midlands. We will enhance our efforts to disengage and rehabilitate those already involved in terrorism, including through the expansion of the desistance and disengagement programme. And we will continue to work in partnership with the aviation industry and international partners to deliver robust and sustainable aviation security in the UK and overseas.

This strengthened strategy sets out how we will build on the UK's formidable capabilities, experience and expertise to tackle the growing and changing threat from terrorism in all its forms.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-06-04/debates/1806041200001/Counter-Terrorism>

## Home Office

### **Securing the future: counter-terrorism strategy published**

... The threat from terrorism is shifting and evolving in the UK and globally. A marked shift was demonstrated by the appalling attacks in London and Manchester in 2017 which cost the lives of 36 innocent people and changed the lives of many more.

It prompted a fundamental review of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy – CONTEST – to respond to the scale of the threat and the speed with which plots are now developing.

The result is a new, more agile, flexible and co-ordinated approach designed to better prevent, detect and disrupt terrorist attacks, and where attacks get through, to limit the impact and recover swiftly.

Central to the new strategy is working in partnership at international, national and local level, between government, agencies, the private sector and communities. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/securing-the-future-counter-terrorism-strategy-published>

### **CONTEST The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism 2018**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/713284/CCS207\\_CCS0218929798-1\\_CONTEST\\_3.0\\_WEB\\_003\\_PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/713284/CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB_003_PDF)

## Welsh Assembly Oral Answers

### Questions to the First Minister: Community Cohesion in South Wales

... 62 **Mohammad Asghar (Conservative)**: First Minister, third sector organisations play a vital role in strengthening and actively promoting community cohesion as well as providing a link between public sector bodies and ethnic minority communities. For them to succeed, they need the support of the Welsh Government. So, will the First Minister outline how his strategy to improve community cohesion will utilise and support the third sector in Wales, please?

**63 The First Minister, Carwyn Jones**: Well, one of the things that we're looking at is whether we should update the community cohesion plan for the summer of this year to take account of recent rises in hate crime and the new challenges to community cohesion in Wales. I can confirm that we plan to publish the community cohesion plan and the tackling hate crimes delivery plan, so that as those plans are taken forward, they will take account of new evidence and fresh circumstances.

**64 Leanne Wood (Plaid Cymru)**: There is definitely more that can be done on this front, First Minister, when you consider that the latest figures from the Home Office show that hate crimes are up by a fifth in Wales in just one year. The majority of the 2,941 offences recorded—and we know that there will be many more incidents that go unreported—are related to race or religion, and if you combine this with Nazi graffiti that has appeared in Cardiff and Newport in recent months, a worrying picture begins to emerge. We also know that Muslim women are disproportionately affected by hate crime. So, can you tell us: what can your Government do to provide targeted support, in particular for Muslim women, but to all others who are victims of hate crime and discrimination, and how can Welsh Government directly challenge this growing problem of hate crime?

**65 The First Minister, Carwyn Jones**: Well, as I said earlier on, we do fund Victim Support Cymru, and I said earlier on when that funding would continue until—at least 2020. Can I join with her in deploring the daubing of racist slogans on buildings, particularly, but not exclusively, in Newport? I know that she will share my strong condemnation of that. When it comes to reporting crimes, of course, there are two ways of looking at it: firstly, if there was an increase in reported crime, it may be that the actual level of crime has increased, but also it may be that people are more willing to come forward to report crime. It's always difficult to get underneath the statistics. From our perspective, we believe that more people are coming forward. There are not enough yet that report hate crime, and that's why, of course, we continue to support Victim Support Cymru, as I've said, and also, of course, to see how we can further evaluate the community cohesion plan in order to be more effective.

***There is no direct weblink to the above exchange. First Minister's Questions begins at***

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4987#A42658>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Roger Godsiff (Labour)** [146721] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 21 May 2018 to Question 144790 on Israel: Palestinians, whether the Government has sought (a) assurances and (b)

information from (i) the Israeli government and (ii) non-governmental sources on the use of arms exported from the UK against protesters in Gaza in recent weeks.

**Alistair Burt:** We have no information to suggest that UK supplied equipment has been used against protesters in Gaza. The UK takes its defence exports obligations extremely seriously. We will not issue a licence if there is a clear risk that the equipment might be used for internal repression or in violation of international humanitarian law. The UK is supportive of an independent and transparent investigation into the recent events in Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-22/146721/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-16/144790/>

### **Arms Trade: Israel**

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op)** [146958] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the evidential basis was for the Government's decision that the approval of the licencing of sniper rifles and components to Israel on 6 January 2016 did not risk those items being used for (a) internal repression under criteria 2a and (b) serious violations of international humanitarian law under criteria 2c of the Consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria.

**Alistair Burt:** Our assessment of export licence applications for sniper rifles and their components, as for other items, takes into account the particular circumstances of the end user and proposed end use of the equipment. Assessments draw on all available information at the time, including information from Government sources including British Embassies, Non-Governmental Organisations and the media.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-22/146958/>

### **Gaza: International Assistance**

**Nicholas Soames (Conservative)** [147780] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will support the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs' humanitarian funding appeal for Gaza.

**Alistair Burt:** I recently visited Gaza and saw the dire situation that Gazans face on a daily basis. We are providing new humanitarian support of £1.5 million through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which is not covered by the UN Appeal. ICRC activities include support to patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies following the recent surge in violence.

Last year, the UK provided £1.9 million to support the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gaza urgent funding appeal. This is delivered through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support critical water and sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. This support will continue until September 2018.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-24/147780/>

### **Gaza: Health Services and Sanitation**

**Nicholas Soames (Conservative)** [147781] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support the Government has provided for healthcare and sanitation in Gaza in each of the last three years.

**Alistair Burt:** In 2018/19, the UK is providing £1.5 million to support the International Committee of the Red Cross appeal. This support will help to treat

patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies following the recent surge in violence.

In 2017/18 the UK provided £1.9 million to support the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Gaza urgent funding appeal. This is delivered through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support critical water and sanitation facilities to stop the spread of disease. This support will continue until September 2018.

In each of the last three years the UK helped to provide basic health services to 1.3 million people in Gaza through our long-term support of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-24/147781/>

## United Nations

### **UN agencies express outrage over killing of Palestinian volunteer medic in Gaza**

"Healthcare workers must be allowed to perform their duties [without fear of death or injury](#)," said the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Jamie McGoldrick.

He added that it is difficult to see how the killing "squares with Israel's obligation as occupying power to ensure the welfare of the population of Gaza" – the Palestinian enclave occupied by Israel.

According to media reports, Razan al-Najjar, a member of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS), was hit by live ammunition fired by Israeli forces while trying, with other first responders, to reach those injured during Friday's demonstrations against Israeli policies in Gaza, dubbed the 'the Great March of Return'.

Ms. al-Najjar was taken to the European Gaza Hospital after being reportedly shot in the chest, but died shortly afterwards. Three others in her team were also injured. ...

The latest incident comes on top of "an already-staggering number of attacks on healthcare personnel" reported since the end of March, said a statement released by UN agencies on Saturday; 245 health workers and 40 ambulance crews have been caught up in the attacks, according to data provided by the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, PMRS and the Union of Health Work Committees.

Attacks on medical teams in Gaza not only risk the life and health of staff and patients, but also undermine the overall capacity of Gaza's chronically underfunded health system.

"Such attacks on health care must not happen, and we need to enhance our efforts to ensure the protection of our frontline health workers. There are clear obligations to safeguard healthcare under international law and these must be respected," said Gerald Rockenschaub, Head of the World Health Organization (WHO) office in the occupied Palestinian territory, or oPt. ...

"It is very difficult to see how Razan posed such a threat to heavily-armed, well-protected Israeli forces in defensive positions on the other side of the fence," James Heenan, Head of Office, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).

"Reports indicate that Razan was assisting injured demonstrators and wearing her first responder clothing, clearly distinguishing her as a healthcare worker, even from a distance," he added.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/06/1011261>

TOP

## Other Relevant Information

### UNESCO

#### **Addressing anti-Semitism through education**

Anti-Semitism is a security issue for Jewish communities and individuals in regions across the world and the driving force of a range of violent extremist ideologies. Like all forms of intolerance and discrimination, anti-Semitism has a profound impact on the whole of society, undermining democratic values and human rights. In recent years, the changing geopolitical climate and media environment have led to a situation where open anti-Semitism is no longer confined to extremist circles and has become increasingly mainstreamed.

International organizations and national authorities in several countries have developed comprehensive approaches to address the challenge. Despite this, preventing anti-Semitism through education and addressing its manifestations in education environments remains a challenge for policy-makers and educators. ...

UNESCO and the OSCE have jointly developed a policy guide, entitled “Addressing anti-Semitism through Education – Guidelines for Policymakers”, which ... suggests concrete ways to address anti-Semitism through education, within a human rights framework. It also provides policy-makers with tools and guidance to ensure that education systems build the resilience of young people to anti-Semitic ideas and ideologies and all forms of intolerance and discrimination. ...

***Tor read the full press release see***

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/holocaust-genocide-education/antisemitism>

**Addressing anti-Semitism through education: Guidelines for Policymakers**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002637/263702e.pdf>

TOP

## 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>

TOP

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes 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](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/>

TOP

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