

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 Answers

Post-mortems

The following two questions both received the same answer

Christopher Chope (Conservative) [150551] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the Government's policy is on the employment by Her Majesty's coroners of independent forensic pathologists; and what guidelines apply to the timeline for completion of post-mortems when carried out by such pathologists.

Christopher Chope (Conservative) [150552] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that when a coroner instructs a pathologist to carry out a post mortem examination to establish the cause of a person's death that examination is concluded within a reasonable time.

Philip Lee: Where it is suspected that a death is as a result of homicide the coroner must consult with a chief of police on who should undertake the post-mortem. The Home Office maintains a register of suitably experienced and qualified forensic pathologists to conduct forensic post mortem examinations. The coroner will engage a pathologist from the register.

Coroners have powers under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 to ask a registered medical practitioner to undertake a post-mortem examination. The Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 provide that the report must be made to the coroner as soon as practicable after the examination. I will raise the question of timeliness with the Department of Health and Social Care and will write to my honourable Friend.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-06/150551/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-06/150552/>

Social Media: Hate Crime

The following two questions both received the same answer

Rushanara Ali (Labour) [148800] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to include a new statutory requirement on social media companies to stop the spread of online hate speech in the forthcoming internet safety strategy white paper.

Rushanara Ali (Labour) [148801] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture,

Media and Sport, if he will include penalties for social media companies that fail to remove hate speech flagged by users in the forthcoming internet safety strategy white paper.

Margot James: The Government response to the Internet Safety Strategy Green paper announced that DCMS and Home Office will jointly work on a White Paper. The White Paper will set out our proposals for future legislation that will cover the full range of online harms, including both harmful and illegal content. We expect the White Paper to be published later this year.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/148800/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/148801/>

UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

Introduction of Medical Examiners and Reforms to Death certification in England and Wales

Lord O'Shaughnessy (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health) HLWS725] Between March and June 2016 the Government consulted on a package of reforms to the death certification process and the introduction of medical examiners. The reforms aim to improve engagement with the bereaved in the process of death certification and offer them an opportunity to raise any concerns, as well as improving the quality and accuracy of medical certificates of cause of death. Safeguards will be enhanced in the process to enable medical examiners to report matters of a clinical governance nature to support local learning and changes to practice and procedures.

As part of the drive to further improve patient safety, I have today published the Government's response to consultation on the introduction of medical examiners and the reforms of death certification in England and Wales, and a copy is attached. This sets out the Government's intention to introduce a system of medical examiners in England. The Welsh Government consulted separately in Wales.

Medical examiners are a key element of the death certification reforms, which, once in place, will deliver a more comprehensive system of assurances for all non-coronial deaths regardless of whether the deceased is buried or cremated. Medical examiners will be employed in the NHS system, ensuring lines of accountability are separate from NHS acute trusts but allowing for access to information in the sensitive and urgent timescales to register a death.

The response to the consultation demonstrates that there is widespread support for the aims of the reforms and for the introduction of medical examiners, but there were concerns about some aspects of the proposals. In particular concerns were raised about how the proposed model, based in local authorities, would work in practice and about the timeframes for implementing the system. Feedback on a proposed funding model was also received.

Since the Government consulted on the package of death certification reforms, events have moved on. New information about how a medical examiner system could be introduced has been generated by the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) medical examiner pilot sites and early adopters of the medical examiner system, as well as from the learning from deaths initiative.

There will be two stages to funding the ME system to enable its introduction while legislation is in progress. Initially, medical examiners will be funded through the existing fee for completing medical cremation forms, in combination with central Government funding for medical examiner work not covered by those fees. Following this interim period and when parliamentary time allows for the system to move to a statutory footing,

the funding of the system will need to be revisited. The existing medical cremation forms and fees payable associated with those forms will continue to apply for the interim period. The Government have proposed that all child deaths (up to age 18) be exempt from the cost associated with the medical examiner system. This aligns with the broader purpose of the Government's recent announcement about steps to ensure that no bereaved family will have to pay for the essential costs of burying or cremating their child.

[Response to consultation](#) (PDF Document)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2018-06-11/HLWS725/>

Scottish Government

Changing organ and tissue donation

Scotland will move to a soft opt out system for organ and tissue donation, under legislation introduced to the Scottish Parliament.

The Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill will change organ and tissue donation from the current 'opt in' system to an 'opt out' system. Under the proposed system, if someone has not stated a decision about donation, they may be deemed as having authorised it.

The Bill contains safeguards to ensure people's wishes regarding donation are followed and that families will be asked about their loved one's views to ensure donations don't occur where the person would not have wished it. ...

Public Health Minister Aileen Campbell said: "We need to do all we can to further reduce the number of people in Scotland waiting for transplants. We have made significant progress over the past decade, and moving to an opt out system will be part of driving a long term change in attitudes towards organ and tissue donation. ...

Under the proposed system there will be protections for adults without capacity to understand deemed authorisation, adults resident in Scotland for less than 12 months and children under 16 who will not be subject to deemed authorisation and will only be able to donate if they, or someone on their behalf, explicitly authorises it. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://news.gov.scot/news/changing-organ-and-tissue-donation>

Court of Appeal

Between: The Queen on the application of Palestine Solidarity Campaign Ltd Jacqueline Lewis, and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

1. This appeal concerns the lawfulness of passages in statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in relation to the investment strategy of authorities administering the local government pension scheme. The relevant document, *Guidance on Preparing and Maintaining an Investment Strategy Statement* ("the Guidance"), included a summary requirement that administering authorities "should not pursue policies that are contrary to UK foreign policy or UK defence policy", with a fuller statement in the accompanying text that "using pension policies to pursue boycotts, divestment and sanctions against foreign nations and UK defence industries are [sic] inappropriate, other than where formal legal sanctions, embargoes and restrictions have been put in place by the Government". Sir Ross Cranston, sitting in the Administrative Court, held that the powers conferred by the legislation could be exercised only for "pensions purposes" and that the Secretary of State had not acted for a pensions purpose in including those passages in the Guidance. On that basis the judge granted a declaration that the passages were unlawful.

2. The Secretary of State appeals against the judge's order, with permission granted

by the judge himself. The respondents seek to uphold the judge's reasoning as to unauthorised purpose and, by a respondent's notice, they rely in the alternative on a ground rejected by the judge, namely that the relevant part of the Guidance was contrary to Article 18 of Directive 2003/41/EC on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision ...

14. The judge outlined the nature of the case as follows:

"4. At the outset it is perhaps helpful to underline a rather obvious point: this case is about whether this part of the Secretary of State's guidance has a basis in law. The claimants and their supporters, including War on Want, the Campaign Against Arms Trade and the Quakers, object to the limiting effect of the guidance on their ability to campaign around the investment of local government pension funds affecting the Palestinian people and the Occupied Territories. In particular the second claimant, Jacqueline Lewis, wishes, as a matter of conscience, to influence how the pension monies she has earned are invested. On the other hand the government is concerned that local government pension funds should not be involved in such political issues because of the mixed messages it might give abroad; because it might undermine community cohesion at home by legitimising anti-Semitic or racist attitudes and attacks (although it accepts that anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian campaigning is not in itself anti-Semitic); and because it could impact adversely on the financial success of UK defence industries."

16. The single ground of appeal is that the judge erred in law in concluding that the Secretary of State acted for an unauthorised purpose in issuing the challenged part of the Guidance. ...

19. In considering this issue there is, in my judgment, a risk of over-elaborating what is in truth a simple point. The 2013 Act confers a broad discretion upon the responsible authority, in this case the Secretary of State. ...

20. It is plainly within the scope of the legislation for an authority's investment strategy to make provision for non-financial considerations to be taken into account in making investment decisions. ... I can see nothing objectionable in his having regard to considerations of wider public interest, including foreign policy and defence policy, in formulating such guidance. In no way does that run counter to the policy and objects of the legislation. ...

21. With great respect to the judge, I think that his analysis in terms of the "purpose" for which the relevant part of the Guidance was included is unduly narrow. ... the Secretary of State was in my view acting for an obvious pensions purpose; and the fact that he took into account considerations of foreign policy and defence policy in formulating the relevant part of the Guidance did not convert it from a pensions purpose into a non-pensions purpose. ...

22. I have therefore reached a different conclusion from that of the learned judge on this issue. I do not accept that the relevant part of the Guidance was issued for an unauthorised purpose, and I am satisfied that it fell within the powers conferred by the legislation. ...

To read the full judgement see

<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2018/1284.html>

The Guidance referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/627030/Guidance_on_preparing_and_maintaining_an_investment_strategy_statement.pdf

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See also the Court of Appeal judgement included in the “Home Affairs” section above.

House of Commons Written Answers

Overseas Trade: Occupied Territories

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour (Co-op)) [149012] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2018 to Question 135452 on Overseas Trade: Occupied Territories, what criteria the Government uses to distinguish between Israel and the Occupied Territories under UN Resolution 2334.

Alistair Burt: We distinguish between the State of Israel within the 1948 armistice lines and the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149012/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-13/135452/>

Overseas Trade: Occupied Territories

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [149013] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 3 April 2018 to Question 133853 on Overseas Trade: Occupied Territories, how the Government’s policy to allow individual companies to decide whether to operate in the Occupied Territories is in compliance with UN resolution 2334.

Alistair Burt: The UK voted for this resolution because of our support for the two-state solution and commitment to Israel as the Jewish homeland. It has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal and undermines the viability of two states for two peoples. We advise British businesses to bear in mind the British Government’s view on the illegality of settlements under international law when considering their investments and activities in the region. This is in line with our commitments, as set out in the resolution.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149013/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-03-22/133853/>

Israel: Visits Abroad

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [149014] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many ministerial visits have been conducted to Israel in (a) 2017 and (b) 2018 to date.

Alistair Burt: The following ministers have made official visits to Israel in 2017 and 2018 to date: (a) Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Boris Johnson, Minister of State for International Development Rory Stewart, Minister of State for Trade Policy, Lord Price CVO, and Minister for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt. (b) Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN, Lord Ahmad Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Sam Gyimah, Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Alistair Burt.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149014/>

Israel: Military Exercises

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [149015] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the role of the Israeli navy in the enforcement of the blockade against Gaza.

Alistair Burt: While we have not made any specific assessment on this issue, we continue to call on the Government of Israel to ease movement and access restrictions into and out of Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149015/>

Israel: Military Exercises

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [149017] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many military exercises the Royal Navy has conducted with the Israeli navy since 2016; and if he will make a statement on the (a) nature and (b) extent of naval military co-operation between the two countries.

Mark Lancaster: The Royal Navy (RN) enjoys a good relationship with the Israeli Navy and conducts routine Defence Engagement activities, including Staff Talks and capability discussions designed to further our mutual understanding and align areas for cooperation.

RN ships have conducted port visits to Israel on five occasions since 1 January 2016, lasting between two and four days. On these occasions the embarked forces conducted routine Defence Engagement activities and small tactical exercises with Israeli Defence Forces.

- HMS DEFENDER - June 2016
- HMS BULWARK - November 2016
- HMS DARING - April 2017
- HMS OCEAN - November 2017
- HMS DUNCAN - May 2018

The last two port visits were conducted under NATO Command, when the RN Ships were Flagships of the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149017/>

Israel: Arms Trade

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [149018] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what UK military equipment has been exported for use by the Israeli navy since 2016.

Graham Stuart: The Department for International Trade has issued export licences for the following military equipment to the Israeli Navy since 2016:

Annual Report Summary
Components for combat naval vessels
Components for electronic warfare equipment
Components for military communications equipment
Components for military guidance/navigation equipment
Components for military radars
Components for naval electrical/electronic equipment
Components for submarines
Components for weapon control equipment
General naval vessel components

Military communications equipment
Military electronic equipment
Military guidance/navigation equipment
Military sonars
Naval electrical/electronic equipment
Nuclear Biological and Chemical protective/defensive equipment
Technology for military communications equipment
Technology for military guidance/navigation equipment

For export control purposes “technology” is defined as specific information necessary for the “development”, “production” or “use” of “goods”, in the Export Control Order 2008 and the EU Dual-Use Regulation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-01/149018/>

Israel: Palestinians

Roger Godsiff (Labour) [149909] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 4 June 2018 to Question 146721 on UK arms sales to Israel, whether the UK Government (a) has made representations to and (b) sought reassurances from the Government of Israel on the use of arms exported from the UK against unarmed protesters in Gaza.

Alistair Burt: Whilst we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, we continue to assess export licence applications on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated Criteria. The Government takes its defence export responsibilities extremely seriously and we have been keeping the situation in Israel under review. We have no information to suggest that UK supplied equipment has been used against protesters in Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-05/149909/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

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

Razan Ashraf al-Najjar

Gill Furniss (Labour) [150195] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the reported killing of nurse Razan Ashraf Al Najjar by the Israeli military.

Alistair Burt: Officials from the British Embassy in Tel Aviv raised our concern about this case with the relevant Israeli authorities on 1 June. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary expressed their concern about the loss of Palestinian lives in the recent protests in Gaza when they met Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in London on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-05/150195/>

Israel: Palestinians

Gill Furniss (Labour) [150196] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he has taken to push for an independent investigation into the recent deaths of Palestinians by the Israeli military.

Alistair Burt: The Prime Minister stressed the need for Israel to carry out a transparent, independent inquiry into recent protests in Gaza when she met Israeli

Prime Minister Netanyahu in London on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-05/150196/>

Arms Trade: Israel

Jo Stevens (Labour) [150708] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, the gross value of licenced armed exports made to Israel (a) in total for and (b) in each of the last five years.

Graham Stuart: I refer the hon. Member for Cardiff Central to the answer I gave her on 23 April 2018, UIN: 136499.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-06/150708/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-18/136499/>

The Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) of licences granted and refused for military exports on GOV.UK and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>

Currently this includes information up to 31 December 2017. Information covering 1 January to 31 March 2018 will be published in July 2018.

House of Lords Written Answer

Israel: Palestinians

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL8221] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they support the referral under article 14 of the Rome Statute, submitted by the government of the State of Palestine to the International Criminal Court, to move from a preliminary investigation to a full investigation regarding the situation in Palestine since 13 June 2014.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We respect the independence of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor, who will continue her preliminary Examination into the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in order to determine whether the criteria is met to open a full investigation. Genuine and thorough investigations, whether conducted domestically or by the ICC, are important to help deliver justice for victims of atrocity crimes.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-05-24/HL8221/>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Alistair Burt retweeted UKinJerusalem

Minister for the Middle East @AlistairBurtUK and UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson call upon #Israel not to demolish Palestinian Bedouin village of #KhanAlAhmar

The tweet includes a short video about the British Government position

<https://twitter.com/UKinJerusalem/status/1006455316245082112>

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-12691 Sandra White (SNP): Gaza, Reported Violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention – That the Parliament condemns the reported shooting and killing by the

Israeli Defence Force of a Palestinian paramedic who was attending to wounded civilians in Gaza on 1 June 2018; understands that the current protest by Palestinians started on 30 March to commemorate Land Day, at which people have been demanding their right to return to their land as well as protesting the decade-long blockade by the Israeli Government, which, it believes, has caused a humanitarian crisis in Gaza; considers that the Israeli Government and the Israeli Defence Force have violated the Fourth Geneva Convention by their sanctioning of the use of lethal force against civilians and medical personnel, and calls for international condemnation and action in response to what it sees as these violations.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-12691>

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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>

Scottish Parliament

**** Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

Bill as introduced

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S_PBill32S052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S_PBill32S052018.pdf)

Explanatory Notes

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S_PBill32ENS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S_PBill32ENS052018.pdf)

Policy Memorandum

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S_PBill32PMS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S_PBill32PMS052018.pdf)

Financial memorandum

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S_PBILL32FMS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S_PBILL32FMS052018.pdf)

Delegated Powers Memorandum

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S_PBill32DPMS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S_PBill32DPMS052018.pdf)

Statements on Legislative Competence

[http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20\(Authorisation\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/S PBILL32LCS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Human%20Tissue%20(Authorisation)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/S PBILL32LCS052018.pdf)

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill - Equality Impact Assessment

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00536306.pdf>

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill - Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00536311.pdf>

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill - Data Protection Impact Assessment

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00536422.pdf>

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill - Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00536439.pdf>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

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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