

Political Affairs Digest

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

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Hate Crime: Lancashire

Mark Hendrick (Labour Co-op) [153757] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 May to Question 145549 on racially aggravated offences: Lancashire, what guidance has been (a) updated and (b) implemented into police policy since publication of the Hate Crime Action Plan; and what effect that plan has had on the number of incidents of hate crime reported in Lancashire.

Victoria Atkins: The College of Policing issued operational guidance on hate crime in 2014 to support police forces in England and Wales. The National Police Chiefs' Council's national lead for hate crime supports police forces to implement the guidance.

It is for the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable for Lancashire Constabulary to assess the effectiveness of the police response to hate crime in Lancashire.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-14/153757/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-18/145549/>

The Hate Crime Action Plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf

The College of Policing Guidance referred to above can be read at

<http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Equality/Documents/Hate-Crime-Operational-Guidance.pdf>

Terrorism: Convictions

Philip Davies (Conservative) [141737] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the religious or ideological belief was of each person convicted of terrorist-related offences in each of the last three years.

Lucy Frazer: As a result of the Government's unprecedented action to protect the public from extremists, we have seen a 75 per cent rise in terrorism-related prisoners over the last three years. That means we need to do more than ever

before to confront and counter the threat, including the spread of all forms of poisonous ideology within prisons – and we are meeting that challenge. With thousands of prison staff now trained to deal with extremism, an enhanced intelligence capability and separation centres for the most subversive prisoners, we are well equipped to deal with this threat.

In the last three years (May 2015 – May 2018), a total of 142 people have been convicted of terrorist-related offences in the UK. 38 were convicted from May 2015, 54 were convicted in 2016, 46 were convicted in 2017, and so far in 2018 4 have been convicted. Convictions in such cases are on the basis of the offence committed and not on the religion observed by the offender.

Data concerning the religious or ideological beliefs of these offenders, if applicable, is set out in the tables below:

2015

Religion	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted	Ideology	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted
Church of England	1	Islamic Extremist	38
Muslim	37		
Total	38	Total	38

2016

Religion	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted	Ideology	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted
Jewish	1	Islamic Extremist	50
Muslim	45	Other	2
No Religion	8	Right Wing Extremist	2
Total	54	Total	54

2017

Religion	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted	Ideology	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted
Atheist	1	Domestic Extremist	2
Christian	1	Islamic Extremist	40
Church of England	1	Other	2
Methodist	1	Right Wing Extremist	2
Muslim	31		
No Religion	10		
Spiritualist	1		
Total	46	Total	46

2018

Religion	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted	Ideology	TACT/TACT-Related Convicted
Buddhist	1	Animal Rights Extremism	1
Christian	1	Islamic Extremist	2
Muslim	2	Right Wing Extremist	1
Total	4	Total	4

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-08/141737/>

House of Lords Written Answer

Police: Training

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8531] To ask Her Majesty's Government what training, if any, UK police units have received from the Israeli Defence Force in methods of crowd and riot control.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The training of police in England and Wales is a matter for the College of Policing and individual Chief Constables.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8531/>

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House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Farms

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [155264] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports his Department has received on the extent of the damage caused to farmland in Israel by fire kites being launched from Gaza.

Alistair Burt: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received reports from our Embassy in Tel Aviv that fires were caused by kites and balloons rigged with incendiary devices or burning rags launched from Gaza. These have destroyed forests, burned crops and killed wildlife and livestock. We understand that millions of shekels worth of damage have been caused. Such actions are destructive to peace efforts. We call on all sides to show restraint.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-19/155264/>

Israel: Bedouin

Judith Cummins (Labour) [155312] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on Palestinian communities of Israel's plans for demolition of buildings in the village of Khan al-Ahmar in the West Bank; and what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on this issue.

Alistair Burt: The Foreign Secretary raised the issue of the Bedouin village of

Khan Al Ahmar during his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on 6 June. He also issued a statement on 1 June calling on Israel to reconsider its proposals to demolish the village, noting that approximately 180 people face the prospect of losing their homes and livelihoods. The UK is particularly concerned by the pending demolition of the village's school, which serves 170 children. I visited the village on 30 May, and I emphasised the UK's concern at the village's imminent demolition, which the UN say could constitute forcible transfer. I reiterated these concerns to the Israeli Ambassador on 20 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-19/155312/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-statement-on-khan-al-ahmar>

Israel: Palestinians

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [155397] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the UN Children's Fund report entitled Children in Israeli Military Detention: Observations and Recommendations, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart following the publication of (a) that report and (b) update bulletins which have followed that report's publication.

Alistair Burg: Children in Israeli military detention remains a human rights priority for the UK. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the issue with the Israeli authorities on 7 February, and a senior official from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office raised this issue with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 11 May. We also raised the issue as part of the UK's national statement during Israel's Universal Periodic Review in the UN Human Rights Council. We welcome progress made in recent Israeli policy amendments, and remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to its practices surrounding children in detention.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-19/155397/>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Kate Hollern (Labour) [155818] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much financial assistance her Department has allocated to (a) Gaza and the (b) Palestinian territories in 2018.

Alistair Burt: The financial allocation for each financial year is subject to change throughout the year, and the final expenditure in 2018/19 will be published in the 2018 Annual Report, which is expected to be published by July 2019. This is not disaggregated by Gaza and the West Bank. The UK supports stability and vulnerable Palestinian refugees through our financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA respectively. We are closely monitoring the situation in Gaza and the UK is supporting water and sanitation needs through £1.9 million support to UNICEF and £1.5 million to ICRC helping support patients in 11 hospitals in Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-20/155818/>

House of Lords Written Answers

See also the written answer about “Police Training” included in the “Home Affairs” section above.

Middle East: Water

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL8494] To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect that the Red Sea–Dead Sea Water Conveyor pilot project to begin operation.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is not aware of a date for the Red Sea–Dead Sea Water Conveyor pilot project to begin operation. This remains the subject of negotiation between the parties concerned. The Government remains supportive of all efforts to promote cooperation between Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8494/>

Israel: Gaza

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8529] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the construction of a maritime underwater barrier by Israel on the northern edge of the Gaza strip.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including Gaza, at the end of May. He met Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Hotovely and Israeli Minister for Regional Cooperation Hanegbi, and encouraged urgent action to improve the situation in Gaza. We also regularly press the Egyptian and Israeli authorities on the need to ensure maximum access to Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8529/>

Overseas Trade: Israel

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8530] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to impose the same trade conditions on Israel as they now impose under the EU–Israel Trade Association Agreement after Brexit.

Baroness Fairhead: 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. This includes the EU–Israel Association Agreement.

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 Rt Hon The Lord Price CVO, the then Minister of State for Trade Policy, visited Israel to chair the first meeting of the working group, which is continuing to make positive progress towards ensuring a smooth transition.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8530/>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8532] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel following the approval of a further 2,000 settlement homes of which half are in new settlement blocs.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 1 June calling on Israel to reconsider its plans to construct over 3,000 settlement units in the West Bank. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa raised our concerns about new settlement announcements with the Israeli authorities

during his visit to Israel on 30-31 May.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8532/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-statement-on-khan-al-ahmar>

Hamas

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8533] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter sent from Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights to Alistair Burt MP on 7 June, whether there will be an independent investigation into Hamas' attempts at peace making over the last 15 years and their current position on the two-state solution and Israel.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been clear that we support an independent and transparent investigation into recent events in Gaza, including Hamas's role and the Israeli Defense Force's conduct. We have also been clear that we expect Hamas to abide by the Quartet Principles, including recognising Israel and renouncing violence, and to show a commitment to peace. The UK continues to support the return of the Palestinian Authority to Gaza to restore effective and accountable governance.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-11/HL8533/>

The letter referred to above can be read at

<https://lphr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/LPHR-letter-to-Minister-Burt-re-clarifying-the-UKs-position-on-the-UN-independent-Commission-of-Inquiry-7-June-2018.pdf>

Israel: Palestinians

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL8650] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel since 30 March, to encourage their cooperation with the independent, international commission of inquiry established by the UN Human Rights Council to investigate all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been clear that we support an independent and transparent investigation into recent events in Gaza, including Hamas's role and the Israeli DeFence's conduct. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary expressed concern about the loss of Palestinian lives during the Gaza protests when they met Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in London on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-14/HL8650/>

Gaza: Kites

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL8748] To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are providing to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in its efforts to ensure that the annual kite flying event for Palestinian children in Gaza is allowed to be held this year.

Lord Bates: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has conducted two kite flying events on the 12 and 13th of March 2018 in Gaza. The event has been taking place since 2012 with the primary aim to raise funds and to send a peaceful message to the world about the importance of protecting the dignity and hopes of Palestine refugees. We recognize the valuable role UNRWA plays in supporting young Palestinians across the region.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-18/HL8748/>

UK Parliament House of Commons Library

Humanitarian situation in Gaza

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2018-0158/CDP-2018-0158.pdf>

Department for International Development

UK aid provides Palestinian refugees, including Gazans, with vital healthcare and education

UK aid is supporting the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) to educate 500,000 children and provide health services for 3 million Palestinian refugees.

The UK will deliver financial support earlier than originally planned to ensure vulnerable Palestinians continue to receive food, education and healthcare. At the UNRWA pledging conference in New York ... the UK will confirm that it will be imminently releasing £38.5 million to the agency to help alleviate some of the financial pressures the organisation is under.

Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt said: The UN Relief and Works Agency is a necessary humanitarian and stabilising force across the Middle-East, providing millions of Palestinian refugees with hope and opportunities every day.

The recent violence on the Gaza border has significantly added to the burden on UNRWA's services, and their vital work delivering food, education and healthcare has never been more critical. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-aid-provides-palestinian-refugees-including-gazans-with-vital-healthcare-and-education>

United Nations

Religious Conflicts Normally Product of Political or Geostrategic Manipulation, Proxies for Other Antagonisms, Secretary-General Tells Security Council

... Today, in a region once home to one of history's greatest flowerings of culture and coexistence, we see many fault-lines at work, old and new, crossing each other and generating enormous volatility. These include the Israeli-Palestinian wound, resurgent cold war-like rivalries, the Sunni-Shia divide, ethnic schisms and other political confrontations. Economic and social opportunities are clearly insufficient. As such difficulties rise, trust in institutions declines. Societies fracture along ethnic or religious lines, which are being manipulated for political advantage. At times, foreign interference has exacerbated this disunity, with destabilizing effects. And the risk of further downward spirals is sky high.

Our most pressing peace and security challenges in the Middle East are a clear reflection of the rifts, pressures, neglect and long-term trends that have brought us to today's crossroads. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains central to the Middle Eastern quagmire. Achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting two-State solution that allows Palestinians and Israelis to live side by side in peace, within secure and recognized borders, is essential for security and stability in the entire region. The recent tensions and violence in Gaza are a reminder of the fragility of the situation. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/20198/sqsm19104.doc.htm>

20 Donors Announce Contributions at Pledging Conference to Bridge Severe Funding Gap for Palestine Refugee Agency

A total of 20 donors today announced contributions, or their intention to contribute, to the 2018 budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), as officials called for stable financing for the Agency amid devastating conflicts and violence in the Middle East. ...

Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, said that in January, the Agency's financial situation became catastrophic due to the sudden loss of \$300 million in voluntary contributions. ...

Secretary-General António Guterres stressed: "We cannot afford to allow UNRWA's vital efforts to falter. Failure to provide desperately needed resources comes with a price: more hardship for communities, more desperation for the region; more instability for our world." Millions of refugees were looking to UNRWA to relieve their suffering and help them build a better future through immediate action. The Agency's outstanding work had an immediate effect on the everyday lives of millions of Palestinian refugees, while providing a foundation for hope and dignity and serving as a critical conflict-prevention mechanism, he said. ...

Following those interventions, the Deputy Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine said that everyone was aware of what was at stake if UNRWA's funding shortfall was not met. She stressed that UNRWA continued to serve as a vital lifeline for millions of refugee families who continued to bear the grave consequences of historic injustice. The contributions made today reaffirmed the rights of the Palestinian people and the need to reach a just solution.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12033.doc.htm>

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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>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

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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