

# Political Affairs Digest

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

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### Jerusalem: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL8750] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about Palestinian families in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem threatened with eviction.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** I refer the noble Lady to my answer of 14 June to Question HL8330.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-18/HL8750/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-04/HL8330/>

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** *We regularly raise our concerns about the situation in East Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and in co-operation with EU partners. While we have not raised the specific issue of evictions from Silwan, we are clear that demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians; call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution; and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa (Alistair Burt) visited the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah on 29 May and met a Palestinian family at imminent risk of eviction from their home.*

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL8794] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports of Israeli forces in Hebron welding the front door to a Palestinian home shut, with no other doorway to the outside, in order to prevent the family walking on a Jewish only road.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, we remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank, including Hebron.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-19/HL8794/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Electricity Interconnectors**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL8795] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the news that the EU has agreed to supply Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the Golan Heights with electricity once the EuroAsia Interconnector has been completed.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The European External Action Service published guidelines in 2013 clarifying the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards. We would expect agreements pertaining to the EuroAsia Interconnector to uphold these guidelines.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-19/HL8795/>

*The guidelines referred to above can be read at*

[https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/20130719\\_guidelines\\_on\\_eligibility\\_of\\_israeli\\_entities\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/20130719_guidelines_on_eligibility_of_israeli_entities_en.pdf)

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Lord Warner (Crossbench)** [HL8802] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they maintain a record of allegations of war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and if so, how they use this information.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not maintain a record of alleged war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-19/HL8802/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Lord Warner (Crossbench)** [HL8803] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they maintain a record of (1) new settlements, and (2) demolitions, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; if so, how many such events have been recorded in each of the past three years; and what representations about those incidents, if any, they have made to the government of Israel in the past 12 months.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign and Commonwealth Office monitors both settlements and demolitions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, based on official Israeli, UN and EU figures, as well as those of a range of non-governmental organisations.

The settlement picture and relevant metrics are complex. These include settlement unit advancements at various stages in different planning processes, as well as the construction and establishment of both new settlements and settlement outposts. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in 2015 there were 1,962 new construction starts in settlements, in 2016 there were 3,069, and in 2017 there were 1,626. No data is currently available for 2018.

According to data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, an average of 35 Palestinian structures each month were targeted for demolition by the Israeli authorities between January and May this year. In 2017, 35 structures per month were targeted; in 2016, 91 per month, and in 2015, 47 per month.

We regularly make representations to the Israeli authorities about both settlements and demolitions. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa raised our concerns about new settlement announcements and demolitions with the Israeli authorities during his visit to Israel on 30-31 May. The Foreign Secretary also raised the proposed demolition of Khan Al-Ahmar with Prime Minister Netanyahu on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-19/HL8803/>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Library

### UK-Israel trade

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2018-0164/CDP-2018-0164.pdf>

## European Council

### **Palestine: EU police mission and EU border assistance mission extended for 12 months**

The Council has extended the mandate of the EU co-ordinating office for Palestinian police support (EUPOL COPPS), as well as the mandate of the EU border assistance mission for the Rafah crossing point (EU BAM Rafah), until 30 June 2019. These missions are part of wider EU efforts in support of Palestinian state building in the context of working towards a comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on a two-state solution.

EUPOL COPPS has been assisting the Palestinian Authority in building the institutions of a future state of Palestine in the areas of policing and criminal justice since January 2006. Through its contribution to security and justice sector reform, the mission supports efforts to increase the security of the Palestinian population and to reinforce the rule of law. ...

The Council also extended the mandate of EU BAM Rafah until 30 June 2019. The mission is mandated to provide a third party presence at the Rafah crossing point to contribute to building confidence between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, including through building up the Palestinian capacity on all aspects of border management at Rafah. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/06/29/palestine-eu-police-mission-and-eu-border-assistance-mission-extended-for-12-months/>

## United Nations

### **Stressing Obligation to Respect Disengagement Agreement, Security Council Renews Mandate of Force Monitoring Separation Area between Israel, Syria**

The Security Council ... renewed the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for six months until 31 December, adding that there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation between Israel and Syria, including Syrian military operations and those conducted by armed opposition groups.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2426 (2018), the Council — stressing the two countries' obligation to respect the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement — requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the Force, which monitors the Golan Heights, has the required capacity and resources to fulfil the mandate in a safe and secure way. ...

**To read the full press release, and the full text of the resolution, see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13405.doc.htm>

### **As International Conference Concludes, Speakers Stress Critical Need to Improve Prospects of Youth in East Jerusalem**

... Shoroq Nammari, Palestinian Vision, speaking during the plenary session on the theme "Coming of age under occupation: Palestinian youth in East Jerusalem", discussed the difficult prospects for the post-Oslo generation in East Jerusalem. She briefed on the obstacles they faced, including the constant need to prove residency in order to retain the right to live in the city, and how newly married Palestinian couples in East Jerusalem faced legal difficulties in living together if one of them happened to be

from outside the city. ... Such obstacles curtailed the ability of couples to maintain ties with Palestinian society at large, which led to the isolation of East Jerusalemites from the rest of the West Bank. ...

Ali Ghaith, a Palestinian journalist ... [said] Since 1967, Israel had taken many decisions to reduce the gaps between East and West Jerusalem and to transition from the Palestinian school curriculum to the Israeli one. ... Additionally, since Palestinian textbooks used in the city were printed in Israel, the latter vetted them for content, he said, adding that Palestinian students in Palestinian-run schools found it hard to have their graduation certificates recognized by universities in Haifa and Nazareth. That was in addition to the bias against Palestinian students when they took psychometric tests to enter Israeli universities. ...

Moshe Amirav, Professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, expressed the dream of a single Jerusalem with two municipalities and two flags, calling upon the city's Palestinians to participate in municipal elections, which would help them to benefit from a third of the municipal budget. ...

Munib Yunnan, World Council of Churches, opposed any Palestinian participation in municipal elections, saying that would give legitimacy to the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. ...

Ziad Abu Zayyad, former Minister for Jerusalem Affairs in the Palestinian Authority, remarked that, for Palestinians, participation in municipal elections was not an issue of improving people's living conditions but rather a political matter since the situation was not only a case of intercommunal conflict, but an occupation. Thus, participation in the Israeli political system would mean acceptance of Jerusalem's annexation. ...

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, delivered closing remarks, emphasizing that Palestinians were tolerant and not afraid of welcoming other people. He also stressed the need to redouble efforts to defend the two-State formula, asserting that the solidarity of Palestinians of all confessions had pre-empted the attempts by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel to change the status of Jerusalem, as seen during the prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque and in the closing of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. ...

He said Israel had ignored a Palestinian offer to agree on withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders and had instead focused on Hamas. ... The Palestinians, and the international community in general, wished to discuss all details of a peace agreement in a comprehensive manner, including the question of Jerusalem, he said, adding that the decision by the United States to move its embassy to the city had complicated Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on other issues, including refugees. ...

He called upon the international community to create the conditions in which all could end the current tragedy, underlining that Israel could not continue to oppress and humiliate Palestinians and still expect peace.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gapa1413.doc.htm>

## UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

### **Occupied Palestinian Territory: Bleakest picture yet, says UN expert after regional visit**

A UN expert has expressed alarm about the deterioration of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, saying reports received during his visit to the region this week painted the most dispiriting picture yet of the situation on the ground.

"After years of creeping Israeli de facto annexation of the large swathes of the West Bank through settlement expansion, the creation of closed military zones and other measures, Israel appears to be getting closer to enacting legislation that will formally annex parts of the West Bank," said the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the

Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk. “This would amount to a profound violation of international law, and the impact of ongoing settlement expansion on human rights must not be ignored.” ...

“Palestinians in the West Bank face daily indignities, as they pass through Israeli checkpoints, face night raids of their homes, and are unable to build or expand their homes or work to develop their communities due to the complex system which makes building permits nearly impossible to obtain from the Israeli authorities,” ...

Lynk cited the situation of Khan al-Ahmar, a Bedouin community near Jerusalem, which is at imminent risk of forcible transfer after the Israeli High Court of Justice upheld a demolition order for all structures in the community. “Its residents are living in a coercive environment that may lead to forcible transfer, not knowing where they may find themselves in the coming months and not knowing if they will be living in a place where they are able to continue their traditional way of life,” he said.

The expert said the situation in Gaza continued to worsen ... “Residents are deprived of their most basic rights, including the rights to health, to education, and most recently, in attempting to exercise their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, they were deprived of the right to life,” ...

The Rapporteur was particularly concerned at information he received this week indicating that many human rights organizations and human rights defenders – Israeli, Palestinian, and international – are facing increasing attacks aimed not only at their delegitimization but also at their ability to operate. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23298&LangID=E>

### **Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcomes of Israel, Lichtenstein, and Serbia**

... a number of delegations called on Israeli forces in the occupied Palestinian territories to uphold human rights and humanitarian responsibilities. ... At the same time, a number of States welcomed Israel’s cooperation during the Universal Periodic Review process. Israel was urged to promote the rights of minority groups, including persons with disabilities and women from minority communities. ...

The President of the Human Rights Council said that out of 240 recommendations, Israel had accepted 70 and noted 170. ...

Iran said the settlement and transfer of populations being perpetrated by Israel were war crimes. Israel must comply with international human rights and humanitarian law. Israel was proclaiming itself as the only democracy in the Middle East. Still, the Human Rights Council continued witnessing a lack of cooperation from Israel that threatened the integrity of the Universal Periodic Review process. ...

Venezuela regretted the absence of Israel at the adoption of its report which showed its disregard for the Universal Periodic Review and United Nations resolutions ...

Egypt was still concerned about the grave human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian territories, and its racist practices at various levels – social, political and judicial - and stressed the importance for Israel to put an end to such procedures and grant equality to all its citizens, in line with international law. ...

Human Rights Watch stated that Israel had further cemented a differential system of treatment towards the Palestinians. Systematic human rights violations included unlawful killings of civilians, including hundreds of children. The authorities had shrunk the space for activists defending fundamental freedoms. The Palestinians were subjected to forced displacement and limited movement, and Israel’s commitment to promote and protect human rights were empty words. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23301&LangID=E>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Equality and Human Rights Commission

#### **How can we stop prejudice-based bullying in schools?**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/how-can-we-stop-prejudice-based-bullying-schools>

#### **Using data to inform and evaluate antibullying strategies**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/using-data-to-inform-and-evaluate-anti-bullying-strategies.pdf>

#### **How can schools use data to prevent and tackle bullying?**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/how-can-schools-use-data-prevent-and-tackle-bullying>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **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 tomorrow**

#### **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>

**Financial Memorandum of the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

(closing date 31 August 2018)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/109042.aspx>

**Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill** (closing date 4 September 2018)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/108999.aspx>

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

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

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