

# Political Affairs Digest

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

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Antisemitism

**Yvonne Fovargue (Labour)** [157721] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the April 2018 final update to the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism, when he plans to hold the Departmental roundtable on concerns relating to the media which was agreed by his predecessor.

**Nigel Adams:** Following the ministerial roundtable with social media companies on 19 December 2017, it was agreed to host a similar roundtable with the print media. The roundtable will focus on the impact stories in the print media have on social media. Plans are already underway and the roundtable will be held before the end of the year.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-26/157721/>

*The update referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.antisemitism.org.uk/files/cj3e6rg8y906h0104uh8bojao/cjftocqti0jfs0105p79u49kh>

#### Schools: Antisemitism

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156639] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the report of the the All-Party Parliamentary Group on antisemitism of 2015, what (a) guidance his Department has produced and (b) resources it is offering in support of teachers handling difficult conversations in the classroom setting.

**Anne Milton:** There is no place in any educational institution for hatred, harassment, discrimination or racism in any form.

The government's Educate Against Hate website ([www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)), set up in January 2016, hosts a number of resources to support teachers in holding sensitive conversations with pupils. This includes guidance produced by the Board of Deputies of British Jews on antisemitism in schools, a toolkit on teaching controversial issues developed by Suffolk SACRE, and the government-funded Deliberative Classroom resource pack on religious freedom.

We are also funding teacher training and accompanying resources provided by the Centre for Holocaust Education to support teachers in facilitating lessons and discussions about the holocaust.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156639/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.antisemitism.org.uk/files/cj3e6rg8y906h0104uh8bojao/cj4mu8p40000x01455ae3ae66>

### **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156640] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect of conferring statutory status on personal, social, health and economic education on tackling discrimination in schools.

**Nick Gibb:** In March 2017, the Government announced that alongside the introduction of Relationships Education, at primary level, and Relationships and Sex Education, at secondary level, the Secretary of State for Education would have the power, via regulations, to make to make Personal Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) statutory in all schools.

The Department is currently finalising an assessment of the evidence gathered during a wide-ranging engagement process to shape the content of the new subjects and determine the future status of PSHE. Results of this process will be published shortly, alongside a consultation on the content draft regulations and accompanying statutory guidance, before laying the regulations in the House for debate.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156640/>

### **Social Media: Liability**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156641] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing publisher liability for social media companies.

**Margot James:** We are currently developing options for increasing the liability online platforms have for illegal content on their services. Applying publisher standards of liability to all online platforms could risk real damage to the digital economy. We will be carefully considering the options and consequences of change, and will set out our approach as part of the online harms and safety joint DCMS and Home Office White Paper on online harms which will be published by the end of the year.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156641/>

### **Social Media: Hate Crime**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156642] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has made an assessment of the implications for its policies of Hope Not Hate's report of February 2018 on Cloudflare and the hosting of illegal content on edge servers in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

**Heather Wheeler:** We have read with interest Hope not Hate's report of February 2018 on Cloudflare and the hosting of illegal content. We will address the issue of illegal content on edge servers in the UK as part of the refresh of the Hate Crime Action Plan which will be published later this year.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156642/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2018/02/10/a-home-for-hate/>

### **Social Media: Hate Crime**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156643] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media

and Sport, whether has made any representations to social media companies on the standard of contracted-out services they have employed to moderate abusive and illegal content; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:** Ministers and officials have regular meetings and discussions with social media companies on a range of issues including safeguarding. Details of ministerial meetings are published quarterly on the Gov.uk website.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156643/>

The Gov.uk information referred to above can be accessed at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-for-digital-culture-media-sport&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-for-digital-culture-media-sport&publication_type=transparency-data)

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Centre for Holocaust Education: Finance

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [156638] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the All-Party Parliamentary Group inquiry into antisemitism of 2015, what discussions he has had to date with the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education on renewing its government grant at the end of the current funding period.

**Nick Gibb:** In November 2017 the former Secretary of State, the right hon. Member for Putney (Justine Greening) met Sir Trevor Pears from the Pears Foundation, which jointly funds the Centre for Holocaust Education (CHE), to discuss the work undertaken by CHE. Departmental officials meet regularly with CHE to monitor and review their work with the last meeting held in April 2018.

The Department has committed to extend the funding for the CHE until March 2020. Funding after that date will be considered as part of the Government's next spending review.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-22/156638/>

The inquiry report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.antisemitism.org.uk/files/cj3e6rg8y906h0104uh8bojao/cj4mu8p40000x01455ae3ae66>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Gaza: Borders

**Nicholas Soames (Conservative)** [158142] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of Israel on lifting the illegal closure of Gaza.

**Alistair Burt:** I visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including Gaza, at the end of May. I met Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Hotovely and Israeli Minister for Regional Cooperation Hanegbi, and encouraged urgent action to improve the situation in Gaza. We welcome the steps that Israel has taken to

ease some restrictions. However whilst recognising legitimate security concerns, we want to see Israel go much further. We continue to stress to the Israeli authorities the damage that their restrictions are doing to the living standards of Palestinians in Gaza and that supporting legal trade for Gazans is firmly in Israel's long-term interests. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary both raised concerns about the situation in Gaza during their meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-27/158142/>

### **Gaza: Electricity**

**Nicholas Soames (Conservative)** [158143] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Government of Israel to improve the flow of electricity supplies from Israel to Gaza.

**Alistair Burt:** Increased water and electricity supplies are a prerequisite to improving life in Gaza. We welcome reports that the Gaza power plant is back online meaning the average electricity supply has now increased to around 5 hours per day. However this still leaves Gazans with at least 19 hours a day without electricity. Ultimately the best solution is a political agreement between all parties on sustainable solutions to increase the electricity supply to Gaza. We press for immediate discussions to alleviate the situation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-27/158143/>

## **House of Lords Written Answer**

### **Overseas Trade: Israeli Settlements**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL8747] To ask Her Majesty's Government what penalties, if any, are imposed on British businesses who trade with companies based in, or operating from, settlements in the West Bank of Palestine.

**Baroness Fairhead:** The UK sets out guidance for British businesses who want to trade with the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) in our Overseas Business Risk guidance, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overseas-business-risk-palestinian-territories/overseas-business-risk-the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

While there are no specific restrictions on trade between the UK and the OPTs, we advise British businesses to consider the British Government's view on the illegality of settlements under international law when considering their investments and activities in the region. The UK is strongly opposed to the Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Movement against Israel. Ultimately is the decision of each individual or company whether to operate in settlements in the OPTs.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-18/HL8747/>

## **UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**

### **Press briefing note on Israel / Bedouin, Syrian refugees /Jordan and Egypt detentions**

We are deeply concerned at reports that the Palestinian Bedouin community of Khan al Ahmar-Abu al Helu is set to be demolished by the Israeli authorities in the coming days. The community is home to 181 people – more than half of them children – and is one of the 46 Bedouin communities in the central West Bank that the UN views as being at high

risk of forcible transfer due to an environment generated by Israeli practices and policies that coerces people and communities to move.

For more than a decade people in the Khan al Ahmar community, which is located near to where large Israeli settlements have been established, have resisted efforts to move them to make way for settlement expansion. Legal avenues to resist ended on 24 May 2018 when the Israeli High Court ruled there was no reason to delay implementation of demolition orders over the structures in the community, including a school. The demolition orders were originally issued on the grounds that all the structures were illegally built.

As reiterated by the Secretary-General and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the planning regime adopted by Israel in this area – designated as Area C - is discriminatory and incompatible with requirements under international law. Any demolitions undertaken in this context would likely amount to forced evictions and a violation of the right to housing of individuals living in the community.

Moreover international humanitarian law prohibits the destruction or confiscation of private property by the occupying power.

Demolition of Khan al Ahmar would dramatically increase the coercive environment in which the community is living. There is also grave concern that should the demolition go ahead, the community may ultimately be forcibly transferred by the occupying power. International humanitarian law prohibits the forced transfer of the population of an occupied territory, regardless of the motive. Such a transfer would amount to a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Forcible transfer does not necessarily require the use of physical force by authorities; it can happen when individuals or communities are given no choice but to leave. Any transfer without the genuine and fully informed consent of those affected is considered forcible.

We call on the Israeli authorities not to proceed with the demolition of Khan al Ahmar-Abu al Helu, to respect the rights of residents to remain on their land and have their status regularized. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23315&LangID=E>

### **Human Rights Council holds general debate on the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied arab territories**

... Israel was not present in the room to take the floor as a concerned country. ... Palestine, speaking as a concerned county ... [said] The occupying party continued to refuse to comply with international humanitarian and human rights law and United Nations' resolutions. ... The United States had recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel last December but this was a violation of international law and the right to self-determination of Palestinians. The occupying power continued to target civilians, impose sieges, carry out land theft, attack religious places and destroy infrastructure. The practice of apartheid and adoption of racists laws continued by Israel. ...

Syria, speaking as a concerned country, said ... The rights of Palestinians and people in the Syrian Golan were violated on a daily basis. The theft of resources and displacement resulting from settlements amounted to war crimes. ... Israel was flouting all its international commitments. ...

Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, condemned in the strongest terms the continued Israeli practice of settlements in the occupied territories, as well as the construction of the wall. ... The Israeli practices and policies of systematic violations were tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. ...

Venezuela, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, condemned in strongest terms the disproportionate use of force by Israel, which was in violation of international human rights and humanitarian law. ...

Egypt said Palestinians and other occupied populations continued to face human rights violations perpetrated by Israel, which was also trying to change the status and religious characteristics of Jerusalem. Unarmed civilians were being targeted by Israel, leading to

scores of injuries and deaths. ...

Russian Federation called on all parties to refrain from any action that could lead to a new outbreak of violence. The decision by the United States to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel was counterproductive. Russia condemned indiscriminate Israeli actions against Palestinian protesters. ...

World Jewish Congress said ... the Human Rights Council was treating issues unfairly. The Council had failed to fulfil its mission to address human rights issues impartially by obsessively focusing on Israel. Israel was the only democracy in the Middle East and should be recognized as a human rights defender.

European Union of Jewish Students said it was profoundly concerned that the sole liberal democracy in the Middle East was being singled out ... The Council was ignoring human rights violations in other States, including Saudi Arabia. ...

Defence for Children International said that between January 2013 and June 2018, Israeli forces and settlers had killed at least 649 Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23307&LangID=E>

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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 in 10 days**

**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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