

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 Lords Written Answer

Religious Hatred: Islam

Baroness Afshar (Crossbench) [HL8953] To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they have put in place to protect Muslim citizens from verbal and physical attack and abuse on religious grounds.

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Government deplores all hate crime including Islamophobia and is committed to tackling it. Nobody should be a target for hate because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability.

We have a strong legal framework in place with criminal penalties for offences such as incitement to religious hatred, racially or religiously aggravated offences such as intentionally causing harassment, alarm or distress, as well as increased sentences for offences motivated by prejudice hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived religion.

We support Tell MAMA in their work to encourage greater reporting of anti-Muslim hatred and to support victims of hate crime. We also fund projects such as Streetwise and the Anne Frank Trust to work with young people to tackle prejudice and discrimination which may lay the foundations for hate crime in the future.

If anyone feels they have been a victim of hate crime, they should report this directly to their local police force, through the online True Vision portal or to Tell MAMA, who will be able to provide assistance and proceed appropriately.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-06-26/HL8953/>

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Maintaining peace in the Middle East and North Africa: Statement by Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the United Nations Security Council

... we all agree that many of the conflicts in this region share root causes and complex linkages. And we agree that an approach to resolving these conflicts that needs to consider each conflict in isolation will not succeed. ...

Overall, our understanding of any conflict should be shaped by an analysis that looks at the full breadth of root causes, the role of regional and international actors and the individual history and circumstances of the country. And in return the response of the Security Council and the whole of the UN to these conflicts needs to be holistic. ...

On the Middle East peace process, Mr President, that a number of speakers have mentioned, we reiterate to our support for the two-state solution, and we look forward to the American proposals which we hope will be able to be issued soon. ...

[The Russian] concept note calls for a commitment to the supremacy of international law and the need for a collective approach to the problems of the region. We can endorse that fully. But where there are cases when populations are injured or persecuted because of the actions of their own governments, that is not only against international human rights law and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which every country in this room has pledged to uphold. It is actually risking a precursor to a wider conflict. ...

... sanctions are a vital part of the Security Council's arsenal. As Article 41 of the Charter makes clear, they give very real effect to our decisions and they turn our words in this chamber into tangible consequences for those who threaten international peace and security. Sanctions are not our first resort and they are not a measure that we ever take lightly, but we know that they work. They have helped bring peace and security to countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone. They helped bring Iran and DPRK to the negotiating table. And they continue to play a vital role in the fight against Da'esh and Al Qaeda in Iraq, Syria and beyond. ...

I would like to say a word about post-conflict reconstruction. Failure to stabilise and reconcile communities after a long conflict will fail to restore peace and security in the long term. It is not a trade-off between peace and justice. The task of the Council is to help the UN and countries themselves find the right way to have both peace and justice. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/maintaining-peace-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa>

Church of Scotland

Church of Scotland urges the Israeli government to halt the demolition of Khan al Ahmar

The Church of Scotland joins its Palestinian and Israeli partners in urging the Israeli government to halt plans to demolish Khan al Ahmar and forcibly move the entire village, home to a herding community of some 180 Bedouin over half of them children.

... as the Israeli military entered the Bedouin village of Khan Al Ahmar, the unarmed villagers were met with violence as they attempted to save their homes and children's school from demolition and the whole community from forced evacuation. ...

Rev Dr Richard Frazer, convener of the Kirk's Church and Society Council, said: 'I was horrified by the reported events and plead with the Israeli authorities to stop the evacuation and demolition of Khan Al Ahmar and other Bedouin communities across the

Occupied West Bank.

“Not only do such actions contravene international law and reflect badly on a nation that takes pride in being the only democracy in the Middle East, they undermine Israel’s stated commitment to a just peace based on the two-state solution.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Khan al Ahmar at this time.” ...

To read the press release see

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/2018/church_of_scotland_urges_the_israeli_government_to_halt_the_demolition_of_khan_al_ahmar

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Other Relevant Information

United Nations

Millions denied citizenship due to ideas of national, ethnic or racial ‘purity’: UN rights expert

Ideologies which define nationality as being determined by ethnicity or bloodline are denying millions of people of their right to citizenship, a UN expert has charged.

E. Tendayi Achiume, Special Rapporteur on racism, focused on the issue of ethno-nationalism in her first report to the Human Rights Council ...

In it, she highlighted the plight of millions of stateless people worldwide—often members of minority groups—who are victims of long-standing discrimination which sees them as “foreign”, even though they have been resident in a country for generations or even centuries. ...

She recalled that in the past, European colonial powers used the ideology to exclude local populations within colonies from gaining citizenship, while Jews and Roma were targeted on the same grounds, in the 19th and 20th centuries. ...

“Countries that have long celebrated immigration as central to their national identity have taken steps to vilify and undermine immigration, with a disproportionate effect on certain racial, religious and national groups,” Ms. Achiume pointed out.

“Islamophobic or anti-Semitic ethno-nationalism undermines the rights of Muslims and Jews irrespective of citizenship status ...

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/07/1013982>

Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

<http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/HRC/38/52&Lang=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 7 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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