

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

School Meals: Meat

Baroness Hodgson of Abinger (Conservative) [HL9784] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 29 July (HL9377), what plans they have to ensure that parents of children at state schools who do not wish their children to eat meat from animals that have not been pre-stunned prior to slaughter have the same ability to identify such meat as those who wish their children to eat meat slaughtered using Halal and Shechita methods.

Lord Agnew of Oulton: I refer the noble Lady to the answer I gave on 20 July 2018 to HL9377.

However, we have noted the noble Lady's points on this issue and will monitor the situation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-07-23/HL9784/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-07-10/HL9377/>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Gaza

Richard Burden (Labour) [165456] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps is he taking to obtain a full response from the Government of Israel that the investigation into that country's use of force against demonstrators in Gaza includes an independent element; and what steps he is taking to promote accountability for potential violations of international law should a suitable independent element not be found.

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. We have called for this investigation to include international members.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-07-18/165456/>

Occupied Territories: Foreign Nationals

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [166267] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information he holds on recent reports of refusal by Israel to grant residency permits and visas to foreign nationals who live in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Alistair Burt: We do not hold information on this issue.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-07-19/166267/>

Occupied Territories: Tourism

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [166268] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on access to the Occupied Palestinian Territories for international visitors.

Alistair Burt: We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this issue, however we remain concerned about Israeli restrictions on freedom of movement and access into and out of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and we continue to raise these wider concerns with the Israeli authorities. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, however, advises against all travel to Gaza. Permission to access Gaza is granted by either the Israeli or Egyptian authorities. Entry to, and exit from, Gaza can be very difficult.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-07-19/166268/>

Occupied Territories: Tourism

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [166269] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will seek assurances from Israeli immigration officials that access to the Occupied Palestinian Territories for international visitors will remain unhindered.

Alistair Burt: We remain concerned about Israeli restrictions on freedom of movement and access into and out of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We continue to raise these wider concerns with the Israeli authorities. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, however, advises against all travel to Gaza. Entry to, and exit from, Gaza can be very difficult.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-07-19/166269/>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Alistair Burt: I condemn the appalling attack in Adam. There is never an excuse for terror. My thoughts are with the family and friends of the victims, and I wish a full recovery to the injured. This tragic incident reinforces the need for all parties to work together for peace and stability.

<https://twitter.com/AlistairBurtUK/status/1022811074725326848>

Department for International Development

UK to double support for Palestinian economy to advance peace with Israel

The UK Government is set to more than double its support for economic development in Gaza and the West Bank to create the necessary conditions for lasting peace between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The new UK aid programme will help create hundreds of jobs, install vital water and electricity infrastructure, and boost exports to Israel, the UK and beyond, Middle East ... The announcement will see the UK provide up to £38 million over five years (2018-2023) to support economic activity in Gaza and the West Bank. ...

The new UK aid programme will:

- help construct the Gaza Central Desalination Plant ...
- provide finances to install solar panels for households, businesses, hospitals and public buildings ...
- connect Palestinian IT firms and UK businesses to create jobs for Palestinians;
- fund experts to help the Palestinian Authority work with the Government of Israel to unblock the transfer of taxes and custom revenues estimated to be worth £220m per year from the Government of Israel to the Palestinian Authority; and
- provide technical support to help Palestinian businesses export ...

Minister for the Middle East, Alistair Burt, said:

A thriving Palestinian economy is crucial to achieving peace with Israel but wages in Gaza are now lower than two decades ago and Palestinians could slide even deeper into poverty without urgent action.

Our new approach to supporting the economy in Gaza and the West Bank will help create desperately needed jobs, boost exports and collect taxes so that the Palestinian Authority can invest properly in vital services such as education and healthcare. Our work will also help to create reliable electricity and clean water supplies.

As well as alleviating the urgent pressures on the Palestinian economy, this will help to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful two-state solution, which would allow Palestinians to truly prosper.

For a truly sustainable economic recovery in Gaza, we urge all parties to refrain from actions which make peace more difficult and cause unnecessary suffering. That means Hamas and other terrorist groups must cease all violent and provocative actions and Israel must reverse its punitive measures and work with the international community to ease the difficult conditions in Gaza. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-double-support-for-palestinian-economy-to-advance-peace-with-israel>

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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

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>

20 years of the Human Rights Act (closing date 14 September 2018)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/joint-select/human-rights-committee/news-parliament-2017/20-years-human-rights-act-launch-17-19/>

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