

# 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 Answer

#### Local Government: Pensions

**Alex Cunningham (Labour)** [181285] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the recent Court of Appeal judgement in the case of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Jacqueline Lewis against the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the new Institutions for Occupational Retirement Provision Directive will be applied to the local government pension scheme in January 2019.

**Rishi Sunak:** Following the Government's success at the Court of Appeal, pending the conclusion of any further legal proceedings, I intend to reinstate the guidance provided to Local Government Pension Scheme administering authorities requiring that they should not pursue investment policies that are contrary to UK foreign policy or UK defence policy.

Separately, the Directive on the Activities and Supervision of Institutions for Occupational Retirement Provision (IORP II) is due to be implemented by 13 January 2019. We do not feel it is necessary to change the rules of the Local Government Pension Scheme to give effect to it as we consider that its investment rules and governance requirements already comply with the Directive's objectives.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-18/181285/>

*The Appeal Court judgement referred to above can be read at*  
<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2018/1284.html>

### House of Commons Library

#### Briefing: Marriage venues

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN02842/SN02842.pdf>

#### Briefing: Humanist marriage ceremonies

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN05864/SN05864.pdf>

## Charity Commission

### **Interim Managers appointed to Achiezer Association Limited and Achiezer**

The Charity Commission has appointed joint Interim Managers to Achiezer Association Limited ([registered charity number 255031](#)) and Achiezer, ([registered charity number 234038](#)).

The appointment comes as part of the regulator's [class statutory inquiry](#) into both charities, which began in June 2015. The charities are linked by common trustees and similar objects. ...

The Interim Managers will take over the general management, administration and operation of both charities and their property, and discharge the functions and duties of the trustees to the exclusion of the current trustees. ...

The inquiry is examining the governance, administration and financial management of the charities. ...

Both charities were previously investigated by the Commission as part of a double defaulters class inquiry. The inquiry continues and the Commission intends to publish a report setting out its findings and conclusions in due course.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/interim-managers-appointed-to-achiezer-association-limited-and-achiezer>

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## Israel

**See also “Local Government: Pensions” under the heading “House of Commons Written Answer” in the Home Affairs Section above.**

## House of Commons Written Answers

### **Israel: Hamas**

**Nigel Dodds (DUP)** [185536] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken with international partners to help stem violence against Israel by Hamas.

**Alistair Burt:** We strongly condemn all acts of terrorism and call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. The UK proscribes Hamas' military wing and continues to abide by a no-contact policy with Hamas in its entirety. We expect Hamas to adhere to the Quartet Principles, including a commitment to non-violence.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-30/185536/>

### **Gaza: Hospitals**

**Bill Grant (Conservative)** [185730] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department is providing to hospitals in Gaza.

**Alistair Burt:** To help address the humanitarian situation in Gaza and alleviate the burdened health system, the UK has provided £1.5 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) Appeal. This will help treat patients in 11 hospitals under pressure in Gaza, by restocking vital medical supplies including surgical equipment, bandages and medical supplies, and to help provide physical rehabilitation services for around 4,000 people, following the recent surge in violence. To help disabled people regain mobility the ICRC will also continue to support the Artificial Limb Centre in

Gaza. In addition, the UK has increased its assistance to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees by an extra £17m this year to help support the provision of basic healthcare in 22 health centres in Gaza.

Our support in the longer term looks to address the underlying causes of humanitarian strife and raise living standards by focussing on increasing trade and job creation, enabling greater movement and access for people and goods, and enhancing the supply of electricity and clean water. We continue to regularly press the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority about the need to expedite medical permits and the unimpeded passage of medical personnel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-30/185730/>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Palestinians: Politics and Government**

**Joan Ryan (Labour)** [186156] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on the description on 30 June 2018 by Mahmoud Al-Habbash, an advisor to the PA President, of Israelis and Jews as the culture of Satan.

**Joan Ryan (Labour)** [186157] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on the assertion on 5 October 2018 on official PA TV, that Jews dance and live on the body parts of others, and on the blood of others.

**Alistair Burt:** The UK strongly condemns any language or actions that could stir up hatred and prejudice. Our sustained support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding which requires the PA to commit to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and avoid actions that could incite violence or hatred. The UK continues to urge the Palestinian leadership to uphold this principle. President Abbas restated his commitment to the two-state solution on September 27 at the UN General Assembly, and through our financial assistance, the UK will continue to support a stable PA which can act as an effective partner for peace with Israel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-31/186156/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-31/186157/>

#### **Middle East: Peace Negotiations**

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [186272] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the US administration has supplied his Department with the United States' Middle East peace plan.

**Alistair Burt:** We have not yet seen the detail of the United States' Middle East peace plan. We continue to encourage the United States' Administration to bring forward detailed proposals for a viable Israel-Palestinian peace agreement that addresses the legitimate concerns of both parties. We believe the best way to achieve this is through substantive peace talks between the parties leading to a two-state solution based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states, and a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for refugees.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-31/186272/>

### Gaza: Death

**Richard Burden (Labour)** [186928] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the (a) progress, (b) independence and (c) transparency of investigations into (i) the use of live fire and (ii) related deaths on the Gaza border in 2018.

**Alistair Burt:** As the Prime Minister made clear to the Israeli Prime Minister in June, the UK believes there is a need for Israel to carry out a transparent, independent inquiry into protests in Gaza. During my visit to Israel in May, I also stressed the need for an independent investigation with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Hotovely and Israeli Minister for Regional Cooperation Hanegbi. Our Ambassador to Israel regularly discusses the situation in Gaza with Israeli officials, urging action to improve the situation. We welcome news that Israel has opened a criminal investigation into the case of Razan al Najjar.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-01/186928/>

### Gaza: Death

**Richard Burden (Labour)** [186933] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the level of international involvement in Israeli investigations on the use of live fire and related deaths on the Gaza border in 2018.

**Alistair Burt:** We have not made an assessment of this matter. The UK has encouraged Israel to carry out a transparent inquiry into the Israel Defence Forces' conduct at the border fence, and to demonstrate how this will achieve a sufficient level of independence.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-01/186933/>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Richard Burden (Labour)** [186929] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he has taken to encourage all parties to engage with the UN Human Rights Council commission of inquiry on the 2018 protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

**Alistair Burt:** Our position on the need for an independent and transparent investigation into events in Gaza is clear. The UK continues to call on all parties to engage constructively with the UN Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-01/186929/>

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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>

#### **Online Forums Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.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

**Reform of the legal requirements for divorce** (closing date 10 December 2018)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/reform-of-the-legal-requirements-for-divorce/>

**The future of civil partnership in Scotland** (closing date 21 December 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/family-law/the-future-of-civil-partnership-in-scotland/>

**2021 Census: Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland** (closing date 9 January 2019)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/dfp/2021-census-outputs-strategy-consultation-for-northern-ireland-document.pdf>

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