

# 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

#### Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

**Andrew Gwynne (Labour)** [188021] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what meetings his Department has had with representatives of religious institutions on the places of worship security funding scheme in the last three years.

**Victoria Atkins:** The Places of Worship security funding scheme is a key Home Office commitment in the Hate Crime Action Plan.

Officials have actively promoted the scheme visiting mosques, gurdwaras, churches and temples, as well as attending faith-based roundtables. In addition, the scheme uses an Independent Advisory Panel, consisting of representatives from the Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu faiths, to assess applications.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-02/188021/>

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## Israel

### United Nations

#### Fourth Committee Approves 12 Drafts, Including 9 on Israeli-Palestinian Questions, as it Concludes Main Part of Seventy-Third Session

Concluding its work for the main part of its seventy-third session ... the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) approved 12 draft texts, of which 9 relate to Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). ...

The representative of Israel ... said the Special Committee and its mandate fail to address Arab aggression against his country, emphasizing that non-stop threats, violence and lack of regional stability constitute the main reasons for the failure to achieve peace. At the United Nations, democratic voting procedures lack the necessary checks and balances, allowing nations to bully and act in discriminatory fashion against Israel, he said, pointing out that, as a Jewish State, it is a minority in the world. It should be able to enjoy the same rights as the majority, he added, noting however that the whole United Nations system is subject to the interests of certain groups of nations

discriminating against Israel. Regarding UNRWA, he recalled the Commissioner-General's remarks concerning refugee status, noting that only in the Palestinian situation is it inherited automatically rather than on a case-by-case basis. Noting that the United Nations helps those in other refugee situations to end that status by resettling them elsewhere, he said that if that approach were applied to the Palestinian situation, millions of people would not be considered refugees. He went on to outline the terror exercised by Hamas against civilians in Gaza and its de facto control of the Strip, noting that that no speaker in the Committee addresses that topic. ...

The representative of the United States ... said her delegation opposes the introduction of anti-Israel draft resolutions. Expressing disappointment that those texts continue to single out Israel, she said they are quick to condemn its actions but say nothing about terrorist actions against Israeli civilians. They blame Israel for the situation in Gaza while none mentions Hamas, she added. The United States will vote against those one-sided draft resolutions and will be shifting from "abstention" to "no" on certain texts, she pledged. ... She went on to emphasize that her delegation will no longer abstain when the Organization engages in its vote on the Golan Heights, a text sponsored by the Syrian regime responsible for grievous war crimes in the area. The United States will vote against that text, she vowed. ...

The representative of Austria, speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, pointed out that the regional bloc has not expressed a legal qualification of the term "forced displacement", adding that the use of the term "Palestine" cannot be construed as recognition of the State of Palestine. Expressing concern over mounting tensions around holy sites in Jerusalem, she called upon Member States to uphold the status quo for Haram al-Sharif in accordance with previous agreements and to preserve the role of Jordan. ...

The representative of Syria ... noted that the entire membership of the Special Committee, except the United States and Israel, sent an unambiguous message to Israel regarding its occupation of the Syrian Golan by voting overwhelmingly in favour of the relevant draft resolution. ... Condemning Israel's attempt to conduct elections, establish settlements and coordinate with terrorists in the Golan, he said the occupation provides protection to terrorists and squanders the region's wealth through exploitation by United States oil companies working in the region ...

The representative of Israel, expressing gratitude for support from the United States, said thousands were being slaughtered every day in Syria while the Government remained hooked up to the "IV" of Iranian support, adding that people seem to forget that reality when given a chance to slander Israel. ...

The representative of Syria ... emphasized that the question of Israel's occupation of the Syrian Golan is not a question of whom governed by Israel, but a diplomatic and legal question. That country's representative was unable to understand the political legal message of today's vote, he said, pointing out that he used the expression "Golan Heights" as an inaccurate description of the Occupied Syrian Golan ... the territory is Syrian, he emphasized, warning that if Israel does not return it to Syria, it has opened the door to other options, including war. ...

The representative of Israel pointed out that Yom Kippur — a significant holiday for the Jewish religion and the only official Jewish holiday recognized by the United Nations when staff members are given the opportunity to take a floating day — will conflict with meetings scheduled in 2019, according to the programme of work. He requested that the programme be adjusted and that no meetings be scheduled on Yom Kippur in the future.

... the Committee approved ... the draft decision "Proposed programme of work and timetable of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly" ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gaspd688.doc.htm>

**Assistance to Palestine refugees (A/C.4/73/L.14)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.14>

**Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities (A/C.4/73/L.15)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.15>

**Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/C.4/73/L.16)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.16>

**Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues (A/C.4/73/L.17)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.17>

**Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/C.4/73/L.18)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.18>

**Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories (A/C.4/73/L.19)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.19>

**Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/C.4/73/L.20)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.20>

**Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/C.4/73/L.21)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.21>

**The occupied Syrian Golan (A/C.4/73/L.22)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.22>

**Proposed programme of work and timetable of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly (A/C.4/73/L.10)**

<https://undocs.org/A/C.4/73/L.10>

**Third Committee Approves 13 Drafts on Persons with Disabilities, Ageing, Human Trafficking amid Protracted Votes on Human Rights in Syria, Myanmar**

... The representative of Saudi Arabia ... [said] Saudi Arabia welcomes pilgrims from all countries, including Israel ...

The Committee then turned to the draft resolution titled "Global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action" ...

The representative of Israel, recalling that the Jewish people have been victims of racism for thousands of years, said her country has been an outspoken advocate in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. However, a small group of States use the Durban Conference to defame and delegitimize Israel, and thus, she will vote against the text.

The representative of the United States ... said her country is committed to fighting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Acknowledging that

this fight remains a challenge, she pointed out that her country continues to implement the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The draft resolution is not genuinely focused on fighting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance as it endorses the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and advocates excessive restrictions on freedom of speech. ... The representative of Austria, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the bloc remains committed to the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. ... States have a common duty to fight racism by overcoming divisions related to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, but given that the resolution does not sufficiently contribute to that end, the European Union cannot support it.

A Secretariat official said the representative of Israel requested a recorded vote on the draft resolution. The Committee then approved the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 128 in favour to 10 against (Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Marshall Islands, United Kingdom, United States), with 42 abstentions. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gashc4254.doc.htm>

**A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/C.3/73/L.52/Rev.1)**

<http://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.52/Rev.1>

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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>

Health and Sport Committee: Stage 1 evidence session

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11777&i=106599#ScotParlOR>

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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>

**Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools** [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

**One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here** (closing date 24 February 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

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