

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 Commons Written Answers

Israel: Bedouin

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [190555] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of Israel on the negotiations regarding the status of Khan al-Ahmar; and with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for the Middle East of 4 July 2018, Official Report column 323, what urgent steps he is taking to demonstrate the international community's support for that community.

I raised demolitions with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 11 October; in particular urging Israel to reconsider plans to demolish the village of Khan al-Ahmar. Our Ambassador to Israel most recently raised this issue with the Israeli Attorney General on 3 November. We remain gravely concerned by these proposals and will continue to raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities. We also issued a statement on 10 September along with France, Germany, Spain and Italy reiterating our call to the Israeli Government not to go ahead with its plan to demolish the village – including its school – and displace its residents. On 31 July, the Foreign Secretary wrote to Prime Minister Netanyahu alongside the French, German Italian and Spanish Foreign Ministers to demonstrate the international community's support for the village and urge the Israeli Government to reconsider their decision. We are aware that Israel has postponed the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar, in order to exhaust negotiations for negotiations for evacuation by agreement. We continue to urge the authorities not to go ahead with their plan to demolish the village.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-12/190555/>

The oral contribution referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-07-04/debates/B11012E4-6183-4928-8DE6-A1192AB77665/DemolitionOfKhanAl-Ahmar>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/khan-al-ahmar-france-germany-italy-spain-and-uk-joint-statement>

Palestinians: Syria

Emily Thornberry (Labour) [190399] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and

Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the scale of the damage caused to each Palestinian refugee camp in Syria as a result of the civil war in that country.

Alistair Burt: The relevant UN agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), has been unable to make damage assessments for each Palestinian refugee camp in Syria, including Yarmouk, due to a lack of access provided by the Syrian regime. UNRWA undertakes regular visits to those camps where it has access. The UK is providing £36 million through UNRWA to support the estimated 438,000 Palestinian refugees inside Syria, of whom over 250,000 are internally displaced and 95% are in acute need of sustained humanitarian assistance.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-12/190399/>

Palestinians: Syria

Emily Thornberry (Labour) [190400] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect on the prospects for the safe repatriation of Palestinian refugees displaced from Syria by the civil war in that country of the damage caused to Palestinian refugee camps in (a) Yarmouk, (b) Deraa and (c) elsewhere in Syria.

Alistair Burt: According to UN agencies, 120,000 Palestine refugees have been displaced from Syria to neighbouring countries, including Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt, as well as Europe. We support the right of refugees to return to their homes in Syria voluntarily, in safety and dignity, in line with international humanitarian law, when conditions allow. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees is clear that present conditions in Syria are not conducive for voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity. This is due to a range of factors, notably that significant risks remain for civilians across the country, of which conditions in return areas is just one. We are clear that a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for Palestinian refugees should be reached as part of a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli and the Palestinian conflict.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-12/190400/>

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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>

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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