

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Holocaust

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-15199 Kenneth Gibson (SNP): 80th Anniversary of the Launch of Kindertransport – That the Parliament commemorates the 80th anniversary of the initiation of the Kindertransport programme, which brought close to 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees escaping violence against Jews to the UK in December 1938; considers that, following Kristallnacht on 9 November that year, Jewish leaders in London petitioned the then Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, to rescue children, and it was decided that an unspecified number of Jewish children would come to the UK temporarily as refugees until the end of hostilities; understands that most of the children travelled from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Free City of Danzig, to be fostered in the UK; notes that the very last transport from the continent, with 74 children, left the Netherlands on 14 May 1940 and travelled to Harwich, as occupation of the Netherlands was imminent with the country capitulating the next day; further notes that, sadly, often children who came to the UK did not later reunite with families as their parents had been murdered by the Nazis or their collaborators; recognises that, during the war years, many Kindertransport children served in the British armed forces, nursing professions, in food production and in war-related industries; further recognises that several thousand remained in the UK when the war ended, and, as adults, made considerable contributions to the development of their adopted country; is aware of what it considers to be Germany's belated decision to give an estimated 1,000 elderly survivors, half of whom still reside in the UK, a very modest €2,500 (£2,249) each in compensation for their suffering, and recognises the warmth of Scotland's contribution to supporting child victims of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-15199>

TOP

Israel

Scottish Parliament Time for Reflection

Robin Downie (Former Moderator of the Youth Assembly of the Church of Scotland): ... In January, I visited Israel and Palestine, and had a short visit to Gaza. It

was upsetting to see the divides in that land, as well as the unrest and violence. I visited a centre in Ramallah for young people who are my age. It was run by young women of the Young Women's Christian Association, the aim of which is to find a brighter future for the young people of Ramallah. When asked about the future of Israel and Palestine, only four members of the class of 30 were hopeful that the situation would improve for the generations to come.

Reflecting on those trips, I was sad that, having seen such unity and forgiveness in Rwanda, despite the terrible events that happened there, I then saw such unrest and violence in Israel and Palestine.

The love that I was shown by members of the Muslim faith was inspiring. The trips highlighted the importance of interfaith dialogue overseas and in Scotland. By meeting with people of different faiths and beliefs, we can build friendships and work together, despite our differences. We can challenge some of the major problems in the world, such as climate change, and we can prevent wars. Through dialogue, we can secure a brighter future for young people around the world and here in Scotland.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11854&i=107209#ScotParlOR>

United Nations

Special Coordinator, Briefing on Middle East Peace Process, Voices Deep Concern over Fading International Consensus Around Two-State Formula

Nickolay Mladenov, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, emphasized that his report on monthly developments cannot be divorced from the broader context of Israel's continued military occupation of Palestinian territory; uncertainties about the future of the two-State formula; the military activity and continuing hold of Hamas over the Gaza Strip; the persistent threat of war; unilateral actions that undermine peace efforts; reduced donor support for Palestine; and turmoil in the wider region. During the present month, a dangerous escalation of terrorist attacks, clashes, protests and violence in the West Bank led to the deaths of both Israeli and Palestinian civilians, he noted, calling upon both the Israeli and Palestinian security services to work together to restore calm and avoid further escalation.

Turning to the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016), he said no steps have been taken during the reporting period to cease all settlement activity in occupied Palestinian territory, as the resolution requires. ...

While noting that the resolution calls for preventing all acts of violence against civilians, he pointed to the continuing violence and threat of war, recalling that overall, 75 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces and seven Israelis, including three soldiers and four civilians, were killed by Palestinians during the reporting period. A major escalation in Gaza almost brought Israel and Hamas to war in an exchange of fire following the November discovery of an undercover Israeli unit in the enclave. In October, exchanges of fire were preceded by the announcement that Israel had destroyed a tunnel inside its territory ...

Pointing out that resolution 2334 (2016) calls for refraining from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, he described the celebration of deadly attacks by Hamas and Fatah, as well as a series of inflammatory speeches by Palestinian religious leaders. President Mahmoud Abbas has spoken out against the recent surge in violence, he said, while noting that Israeli officials also made provocative statements encouraging violence and undermining a two-state solution ...

There was no progress on collective efforts to launch credible negotiations, nor on intra-Palestinian reconciliation efforts, with Hamas deciding in December to sentence six people to death, including a woman. ... President Abbas is reported to have signed

11 instruments of accession to international agreements on 15 November, he said. ... Recapping the Gaza toll over the year, he said the killing of children is absolutely unacceptable, emphasizing that Israeli forces must restrict use of firearms, while Hamas must ensure that children are not placed in harm's way. ...

Nikki R. Haley (United States) said she has been taken aback during her two-year tenure at the United Nations by the frequency and one-sidedness of meetings on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "The [United Nations] has shown itself to be hopelessly biased," she said, recalling that several weeks ago the General Assembly failed to adopt a draft resolution condemning the violent activities of Hamas. ...

She went on to state that Israel has long demonstrated its willingness to compromise for peace but emphasized that no United Nations resolution or anti-Semitic boycotts will ever force it to make a deal that weakens its security. "Israel wants a peace agreement, but it doesn't need one." In contrast, the Palestinian people have much more to gain, she said ...

Karen Pierce (United Kingdom) expressed deep concern over the lack of progress on implementing resolution 2334 (2016) and Israel's continued approval of settlements. Urging that country's Government to reverse its policies and end the demolitions of Palestinian properties, she said her country will continue to try to ease the plight of affected Palestinians. She also condemned all terrorist attacks, expressing condolences for victims. ...

François Delattre (France) ... said recent developments demonstrate that the status quo cannot persist, pointing out that the possibilities for peace continue to deteriorate. Describing Israel's settlement activity as illegal, dangerous and counter-productive, he cited its particularly deleterious effects in Hebron. He also called upon Israeli authorities to end demolitions of Palestinian property and to reconsider laws regularizing settlements. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13629.doc.htm>

TOP

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>

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 2 days**

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>

Islamophobia (closing date 11 January 2018)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2017/islamophobia-call-for-further-evidence-17-19/>

Connected communities – Tackling loneliness and social isolation (Wales) (closing date 15 January 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/connected-communities-tackling-loneliness-and-social-isolation>

The Macpherson Report: Twenty Years On (closing date 16 January 2019)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/macpherson-report-twenty-years-on-inquiry-17-19/>

Extremism in England and Wales (closing date 31 January 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extremism-in-england-and-wales-call-for-evidence>

Racial harassment in higher education (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/racial-harassment-higher-education-our-inquiry>

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/>