

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs
Israel

Other Relevant Information
Relevant Legislation
Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Slaughterhouses

Kerry McCarthy (Labour) [211690] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answers of 10 September 2018 to Questions 170283, 170284, 170285, 170286 and 170287 on Poultry: Animal Welfare, when he plans to publish the results of the Food Standards Agency survey of slaughterhouses in England and Wales.

David Rutley: Further to the reply from the Minister of State on 10 September 2018, the results will be published shortly. We are engaging with religious groups on the results of the survey.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-01-23/211690/>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-04/170283/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-04/170284/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-04/170285/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-04/170286/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-04/170287/>

House of Lords Written Answer

School of Oriental and African Studies: Radicalism

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) [HL13007] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding of the report by the Henry Jackson Society Extreme Speakers and Events: In the 2017–18 Academic Year, published on 21 January, that SOAS University of London has hosted 70 events that were addressed by extremist speakers; whether they have discussed that report with SOAS; if so, what was the outcome of any such discussions; and what steps they intend to take in response.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: There is no place for extremism in our society and extremist views should be exposed and challenged.

The Department for Education has not engaged with any institutions, including SOAS University of London, in relation to the Henry Jackson Society report.

The government believes that free speech should be encouraged, provided that it is within the law as it encourages debate and understanding. Challenging extremist speakers and events is an important part of tackling extremist narratives. However, this does not mean closing down lawful speech, but rather ensuring the right steps are taken to counter extremist narratives and make sure that those who wish to spread hatred do not go unchallenged.

The Prevent duty requires higher education institutions to ensure they have mitigated the risk of extremist speakers spreading harmful narratives before an event can go ahead.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is developing new guidance on freedom of speech in higher education, which will be published shortly.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-01-22/HL13007/>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/HJS-Extreme-Speakers-and-Events-Report-.pdf>

TOP

Israel

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Alistair Burt: Concerned by Israel's decision not to extend the mandate for Hebron's international monitoring mission, the TIPH. The mission has been in Hebron since 1997 and fulfils an important role in reducing tensions in the city between Israeli settlers and Palestinian communities.

<https://twitter.com/AlistairBurtUK/status/1091681894721376256>

European Union

Statement by the Spokesperson on the Israeli Government's decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron

The Israeli Government's decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), which has played an important role in preventing violence between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in Hebron., risks further deteriorating the already fragile situation on the ground.

In line with the statement issued by the contributing countries to the mission, the EU stresses Israel's obligations under international law to protect the Palestinian people in Hebron, as well as in other parts of the occupied Palestinian territory.

As reflected in successive Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, the EU is strongly opposed to Israel's settlement policy which is illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace. The European Union will continue to engage with both parties and with its international and regional partners to support a resumption of a meaningful process towards a negotiated two-state solution, the only realistic and viable way to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of both parties.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-Homepage/57554/statement-spokesperson-israeli-government%E2%80%99s-decision-not-renew-mandate-temporary-international_en

The statement referred to above can be read at

https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/joint-statement-by-the-foreign-ministers-of-the-tiph-contributing-countries.html

United Nations

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General regarding the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH)

The Secretary-General noted the joint statement issued by the Foreign Ministers of Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey following Israel's decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), established pursuant to the provisions of the 1995 Interim Agreement (Oslo II Accord) between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He is grateful to the TIPH's contributing countries and the service of their respective observers over the past 22 years. He further hopes that an agreement can be found by the parties to preserve the TIPH's long-standing and valuable contribution to conflict prevention and the protection of Palestinians in Hebron.

The Secretary-General continues to engage with relevant Member States and the parties on the ground to ensure the protection, safety, and wellbeing of civilians. He reiterates his commitment to the two-state solution and to safeguarding the principles and vision enshrined in the Oslo framework, relevant United Nations resolutions, and other applicable agreements.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2019-02-01/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-regarding-the-temporary-international-presence-hebron-%28tiph%29>

The statement referred to above can be read at

https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/joint-statement-by-the-foreign-ministers-of-the-tiph-contributing-countries.html

TOP

Other Relevant Information

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Free speech to be protected at university

New guidance that will protect lawful free speech and empower students and universities has been unveiled by ten leading organisations to ensure campuses still remain a forum for open and robust enquiry.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has collaborated with leading organisations from across the sector to develop new guidance to be used by all institutions and students' unions, demonstrating the sector's commitment to upholding freedom of expression.

This guidance is the first time that legal rights and obligations around free speech have been defined so coherently, empowering institutions, students' unions and individuals to stand up for free speech, and creating a structure for them to work together. It clarifies the limited occasions where free speech can lawfully be limited, allowing it to flourish for current and future generations of students. ...

David Isaac, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, said: 'The free expression and exchange of different views without persecution or interference goes straight to the heart of our democracy and is a vital part of higher education. Holding open, challenging debates rather than silencing the views of those we don't agree with helps to build tolerance and address prejudice and discrimination.

'Our guidance makes clear that freedom of speech in higher education should be upheld at every opportunity and should only be limited where there are genuine safety concerns or it constitutes unlawful behaviour.'

Universities Minister, Chris Skidmore, said: '... The guidance provides a clear framework for institutions and student unions to work within, and provides additional clarity on the contentious issue of hate speech.' ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/free-speech-be-protected-university>

Freedom of expression: a guide for higher education providers and students' unions in England and Wales

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/freedom-of-expression-guide-for-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england-and-wales.pdf>

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>

International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill

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

Committee Stage, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-02-01/debates/080C3436-312A-45AC-AFD8-332AFE287A20/OrganDonation\(DeemedConsent\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-02-01/debates/080C3436-312A-45AC-AFD8-332AFE287A20/OrganDonation(DeemedConsent)Bill)

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

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

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

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/>

**** *closing date extended***

Racial harassment in higher education (closing date 28 February 2019)

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

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission – Draft Strategic Plan 2019-22

(closing date 15 March 2019)

<http://www.nihrc.org/news/detail/ni-human-rights-commission-draft-strategic-plan-2019-2022-consultation>

Scottish charity law (closing date 1 April 2019)

<https://tinyurl.com/y9ln88df>

TOP