



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Hate Crime

**John Hayes (Conservative)** [218185] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases of hate crime there have been in each police force area in each of the last five years.

**Nick Hurd:** The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of Hate crime offences recorded by the police in England and Wales. Data at the Police Force Area level are published in Open Data Tables and can be found here:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/749319/prc-hate-crime-open-data.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/749319/prc-hate-crime-open-data.ods)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-07/218185/>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Trade Agreements: Israel

**Richard Burden (Labour)** [219275] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2019 to Question 216933, Trade Agreements: Israel, on which borders are the (a) pre-existing agreements and (b) Continuity Agreement agreed in principle between the UK and Israel based.

**George Hollingbery:** The EU-Israel Trade Agreements apply to the State of Israel. The same position is being incorporated into the UK-Israel Agreement. The UK does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), including the settlements, as part of the State of Israel. The OPTs are not covered by the current EU-Israel Trade Agreements, nor by the UK-Israel Agreement.

The EU-Palestinian Authority Interim Agreement applies to the territory of the West

Bank and the Gaza Strip. The same position is being incorporated into the UK-Palestinian Authority Interim Agreement, which is due to be signed in the coming weeks.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-11/219275/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-05/216933/>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### UNRWA: Schools

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench)** [HL13397] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of reports that Israel intends to remove United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East schools in East Jerusalem; and whether they intend to make representations to the government of Israel in this regard.

**Lord Bates:** UK Officials have contacted UNRWA following media reports surrounding the future of UNRWA schools in East Jerusalem. UNRWA stated that they have not received any official indication that there will be any change to their operation in East Jerusalem.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-04/HL13397/>

### Hebron

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL13478] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the government of Israel's decision not to renew the mandate of the International Monitoring Force in Hebron.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are concerned by Israel's decision not to extend the mandate for Hebron's international monitoring mission. The mission has been in Hebron for over 20 years and fulfilled an important role in reducing tensions in the city between Israeli settlers and Palestinian communities. Our Ambassador to Israel raised our concerns over this decision with the Israeli authorities on 29 January. The Minister for the Middle East discussed our concerns with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 30 January and also expressed these concerns in a Tweet on the 2 February.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-05/HL13478/>

*The tweet referred to above can be read at*

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

## United Nations

### Settlements Deepen Sense of Mistrust, Undermine Two-State Solution, Secretary-General Tells Palestinian Rights Committee

... I commend your efforts and commitment towards a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian question.

This can only be achieved through realization of the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, based on relevant United Nations resolutions, long-held principles, previous agreements and international law.

Unfortunately, over this past year, the situation has not moved in that direction. Protests in Gaza resulted in hundreds dead and thousands wounded by Israeli security forces. Security incidents and provocations by Hamas and other militants in Gaza, including the launching of rockets and incendiary kites, dangerously escalated the situation. ...

I appeal to Hamas authorities in Gaza to prevent provocations, and under international humanitarian law, Israel, too, has a responsibility to exercise maximum restraint and to not use lethal force, except as foreseen in international law, as a last resort against imminent threat of death or serious injury. ...

Gaza is an integral part of a future Palestinian State and Palestinian unity is needed for a politically stable, economically viable, sovereign and independent State of Palestine.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza must also be immediately addressed. ... I urge Israel to lift restrictions on the movement of people and goods, which also hamper the efforts of the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies, without naturally jeopardizing legitimate security concerns. ...

There is also risk of further unrest in the West Bank. The construction and planning of settlements by Israel have expanded deeper into Area C in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem.

Settlements are illegal under international law. They deepen the sense of mistrust and undermine the two-State solution. Settler violence remains a very serious concern. I was also shocked by the recent murder of an Israeli teenager, which has now been categorized as a terrorist act.

I also regret the decision by Israel not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron. I hope an agreement can be found by the parties to preserve this long-standing and valuable arrangement.

Palestinians have endured more than a half-century of occupation and denial of their legitimate right to self-determination.

Israelis and Palestinians continue to suffer from deadly cycles of violence. Leaders have a responsibility to their populations, not least the youth, to reverse this negative trajectory and pave the way towards peace, stability and reconciliation. ...

As I have said repeatedly, there is no plan B.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19461.doc.htm>

### **Efforts to Advance Two-State Formula Untenable amid Violence, Secretary-General Tells Palestinian Rights Committee, Warning 'There Is No Plan B'**

... **Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine**, thanked Egypt and other stakeholders for their efforts to effect reconciliation, while emphasizing: "We have to put our house in order." Going forward, "we will double our efforts" for the objective of achieving a two-State solution ...

**Committee Chair Cheikh Niang** (Senegal), noted that although the parameters of a definitive solution are clearly identified and known to all, the political horizon has never seemed so uncertain. ... Only a definitive solution will make it possible to address other Middle East challenges, such as terrorism, violent extremism, poverty and exclusion, he emphasized ... He reiterated the Committee's condemnation of all forms of violence and incitement to hatred, he said the best way to create favourable conditions for sustainable peace between Israelis and Palestinians would be to renounce violence and fait-accomplis politics and return to the negotiating table intent on achieving an overall solution giving each party the right to a sovereign State.

Concerning the question of Jerusalem, he called for respecting the status quo pending the definitive resolution of the holy city's final status. ...

The Committee then heard a briefing by **Laith Abu Zayed of Amnesty International**, who

presented ... the findings of the human rights group's recent report, "Destination: Occupation, Digital Tourism and Israel's Illegal Settlements". Focusing on four companies – Airbnb, Booking.com, TripAdvisor and Expedia – he said their claims of respect for high ethical standards and the rule of law do not seem to apply in the case of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. By listing accommodation, attractions and tours on their websites, those companies help sustain an illegal situation, as well as a regime that abuses Palestinian human rights, he said. ...

Noting that the West Bank was on the itineraries of almost half of the 4 million tourists who visited Israel in 2018, he stressed that the four companies must halt their listing of tourist accommodation, activities and attractions run by Israeli settlers in the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and to extend compensation to affected Palestinian communities. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/gapal1420.doc.htm>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE1594902019ENGLISH.PDF>

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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>

#### **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>

#### **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>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 7 days**

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

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

**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>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438