



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

## Home Affairs

### Equality and Human Rights Commission

#### **Antisemitism in the Labour Party: our response to complaints**

An Equality and Human Rights Commission spokesperson said: Having received a number of complaints regarding antisemitism in the Labour Party, we believe the Labour Party may have unlawfully discriminated against people because of their ethnicity and religious beliefs.

Our concerns are sufficient for us to consider using our statutory enforcement powers. As set out in our enforcement policy, we are now engaging with the Labour Party to give them an opportunity to respond.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/antisemitism-labour-party-our-response-complaints>

TOP

## Holocaust

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench)** [HL13986] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on road traffic, in particular HGVs and coaches, in central London, of the proposed Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens (1) during its construction, and (2) once in use.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** We have carried out detailed assessments of the impact on traffic of both the construction and operation phases. Providing full information will exceed the words limit to answer. The full reports are publicly available as part of the planning application at:

<https://idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PL0CVYRP27000>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL13986/>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Lord Wasserman (Conservative)** [HL14029] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 20 February (HL13503), what the total cost of the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is expected to be.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** The estimated cost of building the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is £102 million (including VAT).

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14029/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-06/HL13503/>

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Lord Wasserman (Conservative)** [HL14030] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 20 February (HL13503), how much has been raised to date through the society-wide fundraising effort to deliver the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre and its wider educational objectives.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** A newly established independent charity, headed up by Foundation member Gerald Ronson CBE, will lead the effort to secure pledges towards the fundraising campaign.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14030/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-06/HL13503/>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Trade Agreements: Israel**

**Andrew Rosindell (Conservative)** [226602] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the trade agreement between the UK and Israel, what steps he is taking to deepening the bilateral trading relationship.

**George Hollingbery:** The Secretary of State for International Trade visited Israel last month and, together with the Israeli Minister of Economy and Industry, signed an agreement to ensure continuity in our trade and investment relationship as we leave the EU. Securing continuity is the strongest foundation on which to build further on our successful trading relationship.

The UK and Israel have an important trading relationship, which we are committed to strengthening through our dedicated trade promotion team at our Embassy in Israel. To this end we continue to liaise with the Israeli government on maximising future trade opportunities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226602/>

## UNRWA

**David Drew (Labour Co-op)** [226513] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether it remains the Government's policy to continue to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

**Alistair Burt:** The UK has a multi-year commitment to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and we plan to continue to fund the Agency in line with that agreement. This will provide basic services such as health and education to Palestinian refugees in Gaza, the West Bank and the region. Both the UK and UNRWA recognise the need for UNRWA to reform to ensure its sustainability, and UNRWA has undertaken significant cost-cutting measures to respond to budget cuts and growing need. We welcome UNRWA's efforts to broaden its donor base and are encouraging partners to step up with more funding and more predictable disbursements. A long term solution requires a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for Palestinian refugees. Until that happens the UK remains firmly committed to supporting UNRWA and Palestinian refugees.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226513/>

## Hebron

**David Drew (Labour Co-op)** [226023] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the decision of the Israeli Prime Minister to expel the Temporary International Presence in Hebron.

**Alistair Burt:** I discussed our concerns with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 30 January and also expressed these concerns in a tweet on 2 February. Our Ambassador to Israel raised our concerns over this decision with the Israeli authorities on 29 January.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-26/226023/>

*The tweet referred to above can be read at*

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

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14019] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the government of Israel's planned decision to confiscate funds allocated by the Palestinian Authority to Palestinians who the government of Israel claims are involved in attacks against Israelis.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We expect economic and fiscal agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) to continue to be fully implemented, including Israel's obligations under the Oslo Accords and Paris Protocol. We have concerns regarding the nature of the Palestinian system of payments to detainees in Israeli jails and families and lobby the PA on this issue. But this is not a justification for withholding agreed tax revenues. We therefore regret the Israeli decision to withhold some of the tax revenues Israel regularly transfers to the PA and are concerned about the impact this will have on the PA's fiscal stability. Government officials discussed these concerns with Israeli Government Officials in London on 21 February.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14019/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14020] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about its reported intention to demolish two homes, a barn, a nature reserve and a playground in Palestinian communities close to Yatta.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not made any representations on this specific matter, we continue to be gravely concerned by the impact of demolitions and evictions on ordinary Palestinians and on the viability of a future Palestinian state. We have repeatedly made clear to the Israeli authorities our serious concern at the increase in demolitions of Palestinian properties in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. We call on them to cease the policy of demolitions and provide a clear, transparent route to construction for Palestinians in Area C.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14020/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14021] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about (1) threats of violence, and (2) actual violence reportedly made by settlers towards Palestinians who seek advice from lawyers or humanitarian organisations about protecting their land.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to urge the Israeli Government to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations and for those who seek their advice. The British Government condemns any violence by settlers against Palestinians. Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from all acts of violence. The British Government also supports Bedouin communities and Palestinians facing demolition or eviction to seek advice through our legal aid programme.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14021/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Environment Protection**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14022] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the environmental damage caused by settlers to the West Bank in particular regard to olive trees, water resources, land excavation, and waste water pollution.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are concerned by the reports of environmental damage. We have made clear to the Israeli authorities our concerns about the humanitarian and environmental impact of the damage to water sources and the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related activity. We condemn the destruction of Palestinian property and have called on the Israeli authorities to cease such activity.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14022/>

### **Gaza: Travel Restrictions**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14023] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about that government denying permits to cancer patients to leave Gaza for treatment elsewhere in Palestinian territory.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We raised this issue with the Israeli Office for the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories on 18 February. We remain deeply concerned about restrictions on movement and access in Gaza, and the

impact that this is having on the humanitarian situation. We have frequent discussions with the Governments of Israel and Egypt about the need to ease restrictions on Gaza. We call on the Israeli Government to ease restrictions further and for Israel and the Palestinian Authority to work together to ensure a durable solution for Gaza.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14023/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14024] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of attacks on schools by Israeli settlers and Israeli forces in the West Bank and the impact of such attacks on Palestinian children and their education.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not made any assessment on this issue. The right to education is a basic right and every Israeli and Palestinian has the right to live in peace and security. Last year, UK support contributed towards the salaries of approximately 33,000 public servants under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, including teachers, helping 25,000 young Palestinians to receive an education.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-25/HL14024/>

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>

#### **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

**\*\* closes in 8 days**

### 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

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