

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs  
Israel

Foreign Affairs  
Relevant Legislation  
Consultations

## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Homophobia: Minority Groups**

**Andrew Rosindell (Conservative)** [226624] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to tackle homophobic bullying within ethnic minority communities.

**Anne Milton:** Intolerance and bullying has no place in our society and no one should live in fear of bullying on the basis of their sexuality.

As part of our commitments in the government's Hate Crime Action Plan and Integrated Communities Action Plan, the department is taking forward a number of measures to help the sector prevent and tackle prejudice and bullying, and promote tolerance. This includes continuing to support schools in their requirement to promote our shared values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

All schools must have a behaviour policy that includes measures to prevent bullying, and all schools must comply with the requirements of the Equality Act. The department recently published the Respectful Schools Communities toolkit; a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline. In addition to this, the department is providing over £2.8 million of funding, between September 2016 and March 2020, to 4 anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. This includes projects targeting bullying of particular groups, such as those who are victims of hate related bullying, along with a project to report bullying online.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226624/>

*The Hate Crime Action Plan referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/748175/Hate\\_crime\\_refresh\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_WEB.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF)

*The Integrated Communities Action Plan referred to above can be read at*

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Israel: Palestinians**

**David Drew (Labour Co-op)** [226512] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Government has been consulted on the proposals to be put forward by the US President in the plan entitled, Deal of the Century in relation to Israel.

**Alistair Burt:** We have met with the President of the US Special Envoys for MEPP on a number of occasions but these meetings have not been formal consultations. We have encouraged the US Administration to bring forward detailed proposals for a viable Israel-Palestinian peace agreement that addresses the legitimate concerns of both parties. We continue to believe the best way to achieve this is through substantive peace talks between the parties leading to a two-state solution.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226512/>

### Home Office

#### **Country Policy and Information Note Occupied Palestinian Territory (Gaza): Security and Humanitarian Situation (Updated)**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/784644/OPTs\\_Sec\\_Hmt\\_in\\_Gaza\\_CPIN\\_v2.0\\_March\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784644/OPTs_Sec_Hmt_in_Gaza_CPIN_v2.0_March_2019.pdf)

### Church of Scotland

#### **Fresh call to recognise Israel and Palestine as two sovereign states**

Rev Iain Cunningham [former convener of the Kirk's World Mission Council] said a genuine commitment to work for universal equal rights was a necessary step towards building just and lasting peace. ...

He said: "The current tragic situation in Gaza raises many moral and political questions for me. "It runs counter to so much of what I believe, for example, that God created all Israelis and Palestinians, children of Abraham, as equals in His eyes, and that human rights are universal.

"What needs to be done to achieve the same rights for both Israelis and Palestinians – including the rights to security and free movement?"

Mr Cunningham said there could not be peace without justice.

"When I visited Gaza last year, I felt for the first time that some people there were beginning to lose their hope for the future," he added. ...

["Tragedy in Gaza – Britain's Legacy, Scotland's Role"] is being organised by the Balfour Project which seeks to analyse the role in shaping the Middle East played by former Prime Minister Arthur Balfour. ...

The project informs the public about Britain's record in Palestine before and during its

mandate and highlights that while a homeland for the Jewish people has been established, a promise to protect the rights of Palestinian people has not yet been fulfilled.

Mr Cunningham said: "I am glad that the Balfour Project is stimulating debate about Britain's legacy, and about Scotland's role in speaking truth to power, both in the United Kingdom and in Israel/Palestine. ...

"It is time for the British Government now to recognise both states, Palestine alongside Israel, and to change the situation on the ground – for good". ...

**To read the full press release see**

[https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/news/2019/only\\_hope\\_for\\_gaza](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/2019/only_hope_for_gaza)

TOP

## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Middle East: Christianity

**Ross Thomson (Conservative)** [226727] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help protect the rights of Christian workers in the Middle East.

**Alistair Burt:** The Foreign Secretary and the Minister for the Commonwealth and the UN have had a number of recent engagements with religious leaders, interested organisations, partner governments and parliamentarians on the issue of Freedom of Religion or Belief and the protection of human rights of Christians and all religious minorities around the world, including in the Middle East. We are also engaged on issues which impact on the situation of Christians working in the Middle East, including the rights of migrant workers and refugees and the ability of members of religious minorities to access labour markets in relevant countries in the region.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226727/>

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 5 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