

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Street Preachers**

**Theresa Villiers (Conservative)** [230673] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance he has provided to the police on street preachers; and what lessons have been learned from the arrest and subsequent release of Oluwole Ilesanmi in Enfield.

**Theresa Villiers (Conservative)** [230674] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the arrest and release of Oluwole Ilesanmi in Enfield, what steps he is taking to ensure that church groups can preach on the street.

**Nick Gibb:** The Government does not prevent individuals from following their religious beliefs or cultural traditions provided they do so within the law. The diversity of modern Britain is one of our strengths and many British people of different faiths follow religious codes and practices.

The right to freedom of expression is a vital part of a democratic society. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to share their views with others.

Decisions on arrests are an operational matter for the police working within the provisions of the legal framework set by Parliament.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-11/230673/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-11/230674/>

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### **Immigration Controls: Lebanon**

**Lord Campbell-Savours (Labour)** [HL14141] To ask Her Majesty's Government at what

stage would an individual who is both (1) a member of a Lebanese parliament or the government of Lebanon, and (2) a member of a political organisation connected with Hezbollah, be informed that they would, under the provisions of the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2019, be denied access to the UK as a participant at the Inter-Parliamentary Union and other conferences in the UK.

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Where it is known that an individual seeking entry to the UK is a member of an organisation proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000, their application for entry clearance can be refused under Part 9 of the Immigration Rules on the basis that their character, conduct or associations make it undesirable to grant them entry to the UK. Applications for leave to enter at the border can be refused on the same grounds.

Individuals may also be excluded from the UK on the basis that it is conducive to the public good.

Members of a foreign government coming to the UK on the official business of their government are exempt from immigration control under section 8(2) of the Immigration Act 1971 and cannot ordinarily be refused entry under the non-conducive provisions of the Immigration Rules, unless the Secretary of State has directed under Article 4(a) of the Immigration (Exemption from Control) Order 1972 that the person shall not be exempt from the provisions of the 1971 Act.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-28/HL14141/>

## Department of Health and Social Care

### **Opt-out organ donation: Max and Keira's Bill passed into law**

... A new system for organ donation that will save hundreds of lives has come into law, with the Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill receiving Royal Assent on 15 March. Royal Assent means the bill is now an act of parliament.

The Organ Donation Act will mean adults in England will be considered potential donors unless they chose to opt out or are excluded. The act is known as Max and Keira's law in honour of a boy who received a heart transplant and the girl who donated it.

There are more than 6,000 people currently waiting for an organ in the UK. Three people die each day while on the waiting list. The new law will help to reduce the number of people waiting for a life-saving transplant.

Changes to the way consent is granted will take effect in 2020. Before this happens, the government will launch a public awareness campaign to make sure people understand the new system and the choices they have.

Those excluded from the plans include:

- children under 18
- people who lack the mental capacity to understand the changes for a significant period before their death
- people who have not lived in England for at least 12 months before their death

There will also be strict safeguards in place and specialist nurses will always discuss donation with families so an individual's wishes are respected.

80% of people in England support organ donation but only 38% have opted in. This means families are often left with a difficult decision when a loved one dies.

Currently, less than half of families give consent for their loved one's organs to be donated if they are unaware of their wishes. When families know what their loved one would have wanted, they are much more likely to honour these wishes.

The government's public awareness campaign will help raise awareness of the new system before it comes into force in spring 2020, and give people the time to have the conversations they need.

Those who do not wish to donate their organs will still be able to record their decision on the NHS Organ Donation Register. They will be able to do this through NHS Blood and Transplant's website or helpline.

The government will also consult on whether certain organs should be excluded from the opt-out system. ...

Jackie Doyle-Price, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health and Inequalities, said: This is a remarkable change that will make a real difference to so many lives and it has been a privilege to have supported the efforts of so many brilliant campaigners to pass Max and Keira's law. The new system will mean hundreds more lives are saved every year.

Organ donation is a deeply personal decision for everyone, which is why we will be launching a public awareness campaign to ensure people understand the new system and the choices available to them.

Under the new law, being an organ donor will still be your choice – organ donation will remain a priceless gift.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/opt-out-organ-donation-max-and-keira-s-bill-passed-into-law>

TOP

## Holocaust

### House of Commons Debate

#### **Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill – Third Reading**

*col 694* **Theresa Villiers (Conservative):** ... the Bill seeks to address one of the consequences of the holocaust, still felt some 70 years or so after the events in question. ...

The objective of this two-clause Bill is to ensure that the 17 national museums listed in section 1 of the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009 are be able to return to its rightful owners property that was lost, seized, stolen or looted during the Nazi era. ...

*col 695* The 2009 Act addressed a problem that had arisen in relation to a number of our national museums such as the V&A, the National Maritime Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. ...

The governing statutes of the 17 institutions listed in the 2009 Act mean that they could not restore property seized by the Nazis to its owners or their heirs, because the legislation underpinning their rules forbade them from giving away items in their collection, except in limited and specific circumstances. This restriction operated even when the institution in question believed that the claim had merit and wished to return the item to the heirs of the original owner. ...

The 2009 Act resolved the problem and enabled property from national museums to be returned, if that was recommended by the Spoliation Advisory Panel and approved by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The 2009 legislation is supported by the museum community, which has warmly welcomed the intention to remove the sunset clause through this Bill. ...

As time passes and memories fade, there are likely to be fewer claims, but there continues to be a strong moral case for keeping the 2009 Act on the statute book. ...

*col 696* I commend the Commission for Looted Art for its excellent efforts in trying to secure fair outcomes in cases of this nature. The commission shared with me comments and thoughts from a number of families involved, some of which I read out in my speech on Second Reading. I found those comments deeply moving, and what came across clearly

from them was the emotional value of being reunited with an object treasured by a loved one who died in the Holocaust, and that a lost relative had held in their hands and valued—for example, books owned by a much-loved grandmother; a painting given by a claimant's grandparents to his parents; or a favourite painting that used to hang on the dining room wall of a family home. The Nazi regime engaged in systematic confiscation, looting and theft from Jewish people. ...

**Rachel Maclean (Conservative):** I am fascinated to hear my right hon. Friend's argument and wonder what her response is to some of the opponents of this Bill who claim that the routes available are available only to the rich and that, sometimes, when objects are returned from museums, that deprives the general public of an opportunity to see these priceless works of art. ...

**Theresa Villiers:** My response is that this legislation opens the way for all who have reason to believe that an object owned by their family member is in one of our national institutions. It is not confined to helping people from a particular family background....

*col 697* **Bob Stewart (Conservative):** May I ask my very good friend whether the Bill has any provision for the people who looted this treasure, took it away and then presumably sold it on, or possibly gave it away, because they were acting illegally? Personally, when I have come across looted churches and mosques, I have been involved in securing that property and making sure that treasures are kept there until someone responsible can take possession of them. I am concerned that these people seem to have got away with just stealing this stuff.

**Theresa Villiers:** ... No, I am afraid that the scope of this Bill is defined and narrow and relates to specific circumstances to enable our national museums to return looted property. However, there are provisions within the criminal justice system and the system of international law that are aimed at bringing to justice those responsible for crimes committed during the Nazi era.

The goal of those behind the holocaust went even beyond mass murder and mass killing. The evil men and women responsible also wanted to wipe out all traces of Jewish culture in Europe, and confiscation of property was a significant part of that repulsive project, so returning books and artworks covered by the legislation is not really about their monetary value. It is about restoring to people a tangible physical link with a lost loved one, and it is about the conservation of memories and culture that the Nazis wanted to eliminate. ...

Supporting this Bill provides a way to signal that we will not tolerate antisemitism or other forms of hatred, that we will always condemn it and that we will seek to root it out wherever we find it. Supporting this Bill is a way to demonstrate that we will never let the lessons learned from the holocaust to be overlooked or forgotten. Supporting this Bill is a way to show the respect that we bear for holocaust survivors who held on, suffered unimaginable trauma and survived against the odds, and I commend it to the House. ...

*col 698* **Rachel Maclean:** ... I understand that the [Spoliation Advisory] panel has managed to return 23 objects to their rightful owners. ...

... losing an article that is so precious to the memories of a family means losing an object that underpins the memories that are passed down through generations. It is therefore absolutely right that descendants with living memory of these articles and artefacts, who have been deprived of them, are able to go to the panel and have their claims examined in a proportionate way, resulting in the restitution of those items to their rightful owners. ...

*col 699* ... this problem is not just confined to the Nazi period. In fact, when one culture attacks another, it comes for the cultural artefacts first, because the most effective way of trying to wipe out a civilisation is to destroy memories and stories that people tell about a culture and its people. It is evil and barbarous, and we must turn our face against it.

*col 700* The days of commemoration in our local communities are so important, because we have to continue to talk about the holocaust, including with young people. We may have seen off the Nazis, but we are now seeing how important it is to see off other forms

of hate that target people because of their ethnicity, their race, who they worship, who they love and who they live with. We have to stand firm against that in our communities and schools. ...

**Victoria Prentis (Conservative):** ... the Nazis wanted to annihilate a whole race, and getting at their possessions was a particularly pernicious way of doing that. Obviously mass murder is the worst thing that can be done, but there are other means of annihilation, such as the non-registration of births.

**Bob Stewart (Conservative):** ... I want to reinforce the fact that the Nazis stole from anyone they did not like. Although they took mainly Jewish property, they also took property from other people; it is not just Jewish people. ...

*col 701* **Victoria Prentis:** ... When a race or group of people are destroyed, so many papers and documents get destroyed, and the people who would have inherited many of those artefacts are not born, so it is very difficult to prove ownership. People alive today may not even be aware that they have ownership of these articles, but it matters, and it is important, so I commend this Bill. ...

**Julian Knight (Conservative):** ... As the atrocities of the Nazis start to depart from living memory, it is more important than ever that we renew and live up to our promise to the Jewish people, the Roma and the other victims of the holocaust: never again. This is especially true in the light of the growing plague of antisemitism running rampant in this country right now. I never thought in my lifetime in this great country that I would have to utter such words. It really is unimaginable, but it has come to pass once again. I am horrified to read online the testimonies of many Jewish people who are, for the first time, feeling apprehensive or even afraid about their future in this country. It is simply an absolute disgrace, and I believe that every single one of us has a duty to do everything we can to combat antisemitism and racism in all its forms and to make this country safe and welcoming to people of all communities. The horrors of the holocaust can never be undone, but that just makes it all the more important that we do everything we can to deliver justice and redress for the remaining survivors and their descendants. ...

*col 702* ... although the number of new claims is falling, I understand that there remains a huge amount of work yet to be done when it comes to tracing the origins of possibly looted artefacts. Anne Webber, the co-chair of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, has said that relatively little of the relevant provenance investigatory work has in fact yet been undertaken. Furthermore, any worries about the potential for our great museums and galleries to get bogged down by a succession of increasingly difficult to resolve claims must surely be assuaged by the fact that not only have new claims been less frequent in recent years, but the museum community itself is strongly supportive of my right hon. Friend's campaign to lift the sunset clause. ...

*col 703* This Bill should not be seen as a rebuke to those who drafted and passed the original Act 10 years ago. The whole point of sunset clauses is that they make us revisit previous pieces of legislation, test their underlying assumptions, and decide in the light of new evidence and experience whether and how to update the law. ...

In this instance, after a decade in operation it is clear that the work of the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009 is far from done. ...

**Kevin Hollinrake (Conservative):** ... this is not just about the property itself but about the lives erased and the symbolic nature of those artworks taken from Jewish people at that terrible time. It is important continually to remind ourselves of those acts, but also to remind racists, peddlers of hate, and antisemites that we will never tolerate their positions, and their actions will never win out. ...

*col 704* When we read about what happened and what my right hon. Friend is trying to put right, we see that the scale of it is quite frightening. I think there are still 100,000 items that have not been returned and are still lost—some 20% of Europe's treasures. ... it is not just about returning the treasures but holding to account the people who took them. Regardless

of the time that has passed, it is hugely important that we take these great strides and return works of art and cultural items to their rightful owners. ...

*col 705 Neil O'Brien (Conservative):* ... I can only imagine the frustration of families before the original piece of legislation, to which we are today hopefully going to end the sunset clause. Families have been in situations where they have identified property that is theirs in a museum somewhere else. It had been looted from them. A convention says that it should be returned to them and the museum wants it to be returned to them, but they are unable to be reunited with their possessions because of an absurd quirk of the law. It would be even more absurd for us not to remedy the quirk that a sunset clause has, for no particularly good reason, been put in the original legislation. ...

*col 706 Mike Wood (Conservative):* ... Holocaust survivors and their families lost so much. In many cases, they lost their childhood and their family. These are things that neither we nor any Government can ever hope to restore, but what we can do is help to return some of the property and some of the family heirlooms that mean so much to survivors' families. For that reason, the Bill is absolutely vital. ...

We as a nation have been at the forefront of repatriating the items looted by the Nazis, leading the way not only in Europe but in the rest of the world. The Spoliation Advisory Panel takes an approach that is both revolutionary and fundamentally common-sense, without the need for costly legal proceedings and lawyers. ...

*col 707 Rosena Allin-Khan (Labour):* ... As we know, however, the Nazi commitment to their ideal of erasing an entire people did not simply end at eradicating lives. The Nazi authorities set about looting priceless works of art that had been passed down through generations of families; by setting out to destroy an entire people's culture, the Nazis were trying to destroy any record of existence—to wipe them off the planet.

*col 708* While the Nazis were, thankfully, stopped from destroying an entire people's culture, the works of art they stole are still found in museum collections across the globe. The UK, by playing its part in returning them to their rightful owners, demonstrates our commitment to live up to the ideals that were fought for over 70 years ago. ...

It is not of course the only way in which we remember the victims of the Shoah. International Holocaust Memorial Day and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust do excellent work each and every year, and I pay tribute to them for their work. With the rise of the far-right and increasing numbers of hate crimes, it is now more important than ever to remember—to remember what can happen when the toxic fascist ideologies are left unchallenged; to remember that we as a society are weaker when we are focused on the differences between us, instead of the common goals we share; and to remember, most importantly, that it is the duty of every Member in this House to ensure that a holocaust never happens again.

It would be remiss of me to stand at this Dispatch Box and speak of the holocaust without talking about antisemitism. As far-right parties gain momentum across Europe and countries like Germany and France report sharp rises in antisemitism, now is the time to redouble our efforts to pay our respects to the victims of the holocaust; by doing so, we can all stamp out this repulsive ideology.

It was vile antisemitism that fed into the Nazi desire to eradicate an entire people and rob them of their culture, and I am proud to say that the Opposition are supporting this Bill today, to continue returning stolen items to rightful owners, where they belong. It is not right to put a timeframe on justice, and if a family are still searching for an artefact that was stolen, as many unfortunately are, we should not add to their distress by enforcing an arbitrary deadline. ...

*col 709 The Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries (Margot James):* ... I am pleased to speak in support of the Bill ... Setting to rights the terrible crimes committed during the second world war is just as important for us today as it was following the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. The widespread and systematic seizure of cultural property in

territories occupied by or under the control of the Nazis and their allies has been recognised in international declarations as warranting particular recognition and deserving of special treatment. ...

col 710 The extension of this legislation is important. It is no wonder that it has enjoyed such strong cross-party support. ...

Despite the excellent work of our national museums to research the provenance of the items in their collections, we have heard that that work needs to continue. Such is the scale of the task that it would be wrong to begin to suggest when it can be completed. I am sure it will be timeless, which is why the powers in the 2009 Act should be extended indefinitely so we can continue to consider claims from those who were so cruelly robbed of their property.

col 711 To use the words of Sir Nicholas Serota, the former director of the Tate Gallery, it is vital that potential claimants should not feel that the door is being shut in their face. We cannot change the past, but we can continue to bring some measure of justice to the families of the dispossessed. This Bill plays a vital role in allowing us to do that, and I hope it can now proceed. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-15/debates/BBEF2566-96AF-45E7-842A-1A66E194F49A/Holocaust\(ReturnOfCulturalObjects\)\(Amendment\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-15/debates/BBEF2566-96AF-45E7-842A-1A66E194F49A/Holocaust(ReturnOfCulturalObjects)(Amendment)Bill)

## House of Commons Written Answers

### World War II: Genocide

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [229716] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken to ensure that pupils are (a) taught the history of and (b) well informed about the holocaust.

**Nick Gibb:** Teaching the history of the Holocaust is a compulsory part of the history curriculum at Key Stage 3 in maintained schools in England.

The Department provides funding to University College London's Institute of Education's Centre for Holocaust Education to train teachers on how best to teach pupils about the Holocaust. In addition, it funds the Holocaust Educational Trust to run the Lessons from Auschwitz project which provides educational visits for teachers and sixth form students to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In October 2018, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced funding of £1.7 million for a new programme to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen.

Education is a devolved matter, and approaches to Holocaust education may differ in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229716/>

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229098] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much money has been spent from the public purse on the National Holocaust Memorial.

**Edward Leigh)** [229099] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what proportion of the cost to the public purse of the National Holocaust Memorial was as a result of civil servant resources.

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229100] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much and what proportion of the cost to the public purse of the National Holocaust Memorial was as a result of payments to (a)

members of staff of and (b) advisers to the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

**Heather Wheeler:** From 2015/16 to 28 February 2019, the Government has spent £5.042 million on the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre programme. £830,000 (or 16 per cent) of this was spent on civil servant staff costs, including those staff who provide support to the UK Holocaust Foundation. There are no other paid advisers to the Foundation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229098/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229099/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229100/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229625] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2017 to Question 106036, how many of the sites considered for the UK Holocaust Memorial were first brought to the attention of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation (a) before 7 September 2015, (b) between 7 September and 30 October 2015 inclusive and (c) after 30 October 2015.

**Heather Wheeler:** Prior to publishing the site specification and criteria for the location on 7 September, the sites under consideration were those referred to in *Britain's Promise to Remember*. Between 7 September and 30 October 2015, a search was conducted and almost 50 sites were identified none of which were deemed to meet the published criteria. In light of this, the Foundation suggested Victoria Tower Gardens as a potential location. Following investigations into the feasibility of this site, the Foundation recommended Victoria Tower Gardens to the Government in January 2016 as the best choice of site. The then Prime Minister accepted this recommendation and announced Victoria Tower Gardens as the chosen site on Holocaust Memorial Day 2016.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229625/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-10-06/106036/>

*“Britain's Promise to Remember”, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398645/Holocaust Commission Report Britains promise to remember.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398645/Holocaust_Commission_Report_Britains_promise_to_remember.pdf)

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-holocaust-memorial-will-stand-beside-parliament-as-permanent-statement-of-our-british-values>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229626] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2018 to Question 203298, on what date the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation made the decision that (a) Millbank Tower should no longer be considered as a possible site for the Holocaust Learning Centre and (b) the preferred site for the Learning Centre was Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Foundation ruled out Millbank Tower as a feasible location in November 2015. The Foundation subsequently suggested Victoria Tower

Gardens as a potential location and following investigations into the feasibility of this site, recommended the site in January 2016 as the best choice of site to the Government.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229626/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203298/>

### **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229627] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much public money has been spent by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation to date; what assessment he has made of the financial accountability of that Foundation; and if he will make a statement.

**Heather Wheeler:** The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation is an independent advisory body. It does not have budgetary responsibility and no financial accountability assessment is therefore required.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229627/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229628] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2018 to Question 203303, for what reasons Royal Parks was not involved in the selection of the design for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Royal Parks were members of the support panel that provided technical assessments of the competition design proposals but declined an invitation to sit on the selection panel.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229628/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203303/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229629] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2018 to Question 203301, on what date (a) the Government and (b) the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation decided that the constraints on locating the Holocaust Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens could be overcome and that the proposed location should be confirmed.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Foundation's advice has consistently been that the Memorial and Learning Centre should be co-located. Information obtained through the design competition allowed Ministers to conclude that co-location would be feasible and they announced on 24 October 2017 their decision to proceed with an integrated design.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229629/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203301/>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/adjaye-associates-and-ron-arad-architects-win-uk-holocaust-memorial-international-design-competition>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229630] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2018 to Question 203301, what new information available between 14 September 2016 and 24 October 2017 underlay the Government's conclusion that the (a) technical, (b) financial, (c) planning and (d) other constraints on locating the Holocaust Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens could be overcome.

**Heather Wheeler:** A full technical assessment of proposals from shortlisted design teams supported the conclusion that the learning centre could be successfully accommodated in Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229630/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203301/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229631] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2018 to Question 203301, what criteria the Government used to determine whether the constraints on co-locating the Holocaust Learning Centre with the Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens could be overcome.

**Heather Wheeler:** Information requested in the design brief supported the assessment that the Learning Centre should be integrated with the Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229631/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-18/203301/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229632] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what undertakings the Government has given the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation on the availability of land in Victoria Tower Gardens for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; how much land those undertakings cover; and on what dates those undertakings were given.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, who own Victoria Tower Gardens site, are supportive of our plans to build the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. We are in discussion with them on arrangements to enable this to happen.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229632/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [229633] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on what date (a) the Government and (b) the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation were first informed about the potential application of

section 8 (1) of the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900 to the proposed location of the Holocaust Learning Centre.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Environmental Statement (Volume 3) submitted with the planning documents in December 2018 identifies that proposals for enlarging Victoria Tower Gardens were adopted under the London County Council (Improvements) Act 1900.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229633/>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Gaza

**John Lamont (Conservative)** [229271] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on (a) Gazan patients allegedly using medical permits to smuggle weapons or explosives into Israel at the behest of Hamas and (b) the extent of fraudulent applications for medical permits by Gazans.

**Alistair Burt:** While we are aware of the background behind the question, we have not specifically raised this issue with the Israeli Government. We strongly condemn all acts of terrorism and call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. We are also aware that Israeli restrictions severely restrict the movement of medical professionals and patients in Gaza, hampering the provision of quality health services. Our Embassy to Israel regularly raises the matter of medical permits with the Israeli authorities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229271/>

#### Middle East: Peace Negotiations

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [229652] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has received representations on the sharing by the United States Administration of the draft proposals in its Middle East Peace Plan with (a) Egypt, (b) Jordan and (c) the Palestinian Authority.

**Alistair Burt:** We welcome the further information provided by the US, including at the Warsaw Summit on 13-14 February, on the likely timing that the plan will be released. We continue to discuss the UK's long-standing positions on the Middle East Peace Process with the US and other partners, including the Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229652/>

#### Gaza: Israel

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [229653] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the recent violent protests and Israeli military exercises on stability in the region of the Gaza border.

**Alistair Burt:** We remain very concerned about the situation in Gaza. We regularly raise our concerns about Gaza with the Israeli authorities, urging them to work together with the Palestinian Authority and Egypt to see long-term improvements. We are clear that that Israel has the right to protect itself, as it is plain that Hamas

and its operatives have exploited the recent protests for their own benefit. We also remain concerned about the impact of the humanitarian situation, and we continue to raise concerns about Israel's conduct of the occupation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229653/>

### **Palestinians: Terrorism**

**Guto Bebb (Conservative)** [229691] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she has held discussions with Palestinian officials on recent reports that the Palestinian Authority will reduce the salaries of its public sector workers but continue paying salaries for the families of martyrs, wounded or prisoners.

**Alistair Burt:** DFID officials are aware of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) plans to make partial salary payments to public sector officials earning 2,000 NIS (£425) or above a month. We are in the process of assessing the implications for PEGASE beneficiaries (who are vetted health and education public servants) including through discussions with the PA. The UK continues to support a stable PA which can act as an effective partner for peace with Israel, through financial assistance that exclusively supports the salaries of vetted public servants in the West Bank in the health and education sectors. This move does not affect the robust financial safeguards that ensure UK financial aid only reaches intended beneficiaries, meaning aid is not allocated to Prisoner or Martyr payments. The UK government continues to press the PA to reform the prisoner payments system to become more needs-based, transparent and affordable.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229691/>

## **House of Lords Written Answers**

### **Israeli Settlements**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14223] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the government of Israel has approved 4,000 new settlement units, in particular of those to be built in East Jerusalem and in the vicinity of Bethlehem; and what steps they intend to take in response.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are concerned by the reports in question. We regularly raise our concerns on settlements with the Government of Israel and urge it to reverse its policy of settlement expansion. We consistently call for an immediate end to all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-04/HL14223/>

### **Israel: Gaza**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14224] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the UN Human Rights Council, Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, published on 28 February, in particular the finding that the government of Israel targeted unarmed civilians, including children, journalists and medical personnel; and what steps they intend to take to protect civilians in Gaza from such violations of international law.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK fully supports the need for an independent and transparent investigation into recent events in Gaza. We have repeatedly made clear to Israel our concerns about the use of live ammunition by the Israel Defense Forces to respond to protests in Gaza. In particular we have stressed the

importance of protecting civilians, especially children and medical personnel. We have also been clear that Israel has the right to protect itself, as it is plain that Hamas and its operatives had been exploiting the protests for their own benefit. While the Human Rights Council report looks into Israel's actions, it is highly regrettable the Commission of Inquiry Report does not look comprehensively at the actions of non-state actors such as Hamas.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-04/HL14224/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoIOPT/A\\_HRC\\_40\\_74.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoIOPT/A_HRC_40_74.pdf)

### **Gaza: Morphine**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14225] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that supplies of morphine in Shifa Hospital, Gaza, do not run out.

**Lord Bates:** DFID is closely monitoring the humanitarian situation in Gaza, which remains under significant strain. We are aware of reports that hospitals are facing shortages in medical supplies and medicines. To help ensure hospitals in Gaza can continue to provide essential services we provided £1.5 million for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) OPTs Appeal in 2018. This funding has helped treat patients in 11 hospitals which are under extreme pressure in Gaza by restocking vital medical supplies including medicines, surgical equipment, and bandages and helping provide physical rehabilitation services for around 4,000 people.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-04/HL14225/>

## **Scottish Parliament Motion**

**S5M-16384 Alison Johnstone (Green): Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel** – That the Parliament commends the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel on its work towards an end to the illegal military occupation of Palestine and a just peace in the region; congratulates the programme, which was established in 2002 by the World Council of Churches, and is administered in the UK and Ireland by Quakers in Britain on behalf of 16 faith-based organisations, on sending out accompaniers to act as human rights monitors in the region, whose presence, it believes, helps to deter human rights abuses and attacks on civilians; considers that the programme's work with Palestinian and Israeli peace activists helps to contribute to a just peace, and wishes it and its accompaniers well.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-16384>

## **European Investment Bank**

### **School rooftops will generate solar energy for 16000 houses in the West Bank**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Palestine Investment Fund (PIF) have signed a loan agreement worth USD 18 million to finance the installation of rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems on 500 public schools in the West Bank. The EIB's investment, which falls under the Economic Resilience Initiative (ERI) will generate 35 MW of clean energy enough to power more than 16000 houses across the West Bank. ...

Emma Navarro, Vice President of the EIB said: "... This will improve the availability of electricity supply in the West Bank. As the Bank of the European Union, we seek to promote renewable energy with the purpose of improving living conditions of Palestinian residents and improving infrastructure for business." ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.eib.org/en/infocentre/press/releases/all/2019/2019-078-school-rooftops-will-generate-solar-energy-for-16000-houses-in-the-west-bank?media=rss&language=EN>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Communal Responses to the New Zealand Mosque Attacks

#### **Board of Deputies: British Jewish community representatives show solidarity with Muslim Community during visit to Lancashire**

... senior representatives from the Board of Deputies of British Jews have declared their "absolute and resolute solidarity" with Muslim communities in Britain, following the terrorist attack in New Zealand, which has left 49 Muslims dead.

... Board of Deputies Senior Vice-President Sheila Gewolb said: "I am absolutely horrified to hear of this terrorist attack on Muslims in New Zealand. The murder of innocent people at prayer is a callous, depraved act. By visiting mosques and Muslim communities in Lancashire, we are saying loud and clear that the Jewish community are allies and friends to Muslims. ...

The President of the Board of Deputies, Marie van der Zyl ... said: "We are horrified by this sickening terrorist attack against Muslims at mosques in New Zealand. To the victims, the survivors and their families, together with Muslims around the world who have been targets of rising hatred, whipped up by media hostility, we express our absolute and resolute solidarity."

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.bod.org.uk/british-jewish-community-representatives-show-solidarity-with-muslim-community-during-visit-to-lancashire/>

#### **Jewish Leadership Council statement**

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and families affected by the horrific shooting at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. To violate a place of worship in such a way is unforgivable.

[https://twitter.com/JLC\\_uk/status/1106456175917387776](https://twitter.com/JLC_uk/status/1106456175917387776)

#### **Jewish Communities of Scotland: Solidarity with the Muslim Community**

We are writing to you on behalf of the Jewish communities of Scotland to offer our heartfelt condolences after the tragic murder of worshippers at the Al Noor and Linwood mosques in New Zealand, earlier today.

This is a dark time for your community, and we share your grief and horror at the premeditated killing of innocent men, women, and children.

Too often in recent years we have witnessed these hateful attacks, where innocents have been targeted and persecuted because of their religious beliefs.

We extend our sympathies to all who have suffered both physically and emotionally. May they find comfort, strength, and fortitude from their faith, family and community as they walk the difficult path to recovery.

And may they also be assured that the solidarity and support of the Jewish people goes

with them at this difficult time.

[https://www.scojec.org/news/2019/19iii\\_solidarity/solidarity.html](https://www.scojec.org/news/2019/19iii_solidarity/solidarity.html)

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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>

Third Reading, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-15/debates/BBEF2566-96AF-45E7-842A-1A66E194F49A/Holocaust\(ReturnOfCulturalObjects\)\(Amendment\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-15/debates/BBEF2566-96AF-45E7-842A-1A66E194F49A/Holocaust(ReturnOfCulturalObjects)(Amendment)Bill)

#### **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>

Royal Assent

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-03-15/debates/F019358C-A242-4AE3-A2E7-A90D77D6C7C0/RoyalAssent>

Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Act 2019

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/7/pdfs/ukpga\\_20190007\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/7/pdfs/ukpga_20190007_en.pdf)

#### **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

**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