

# 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 Oral Answer

#### Business of the House

**Jim Shannon (DUP):** Two weeks ago, 50 innocent people were killed in Christchurch simply for practising their faith. It is clear that the rise of the far right is a growing threat to freedom of religion or belief across the world. Indeed, the Minister for Security and Economic Crime, the right hon. Member for Wyre and Preston North (Mr Wallace), speaking in his role as the security Minister, said that a similar far-right shooting could absolutely happen here in the United Kingdom. After the fact, the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, called for a global fight to root out racist right-wing ideology. I believe that the UK must join that fight. Will the Leader of the House therefore agree to a statement or a debate on this extremely important issue?

**Andrea Leadsom:** We were all shocked and appalled at the horrifying attack in New Zealand, and I reiterate that we stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of New Zealand. The Home Secretary has been very clear that the far right has absolutely no place in Britain. The British people overwhelmingly reject the prejudiced rhetoric of the far right, which is the antithesis of the values that this country represents: decency, tolerance and respect. Through our CONTEST policy and our counter-extremism strategy, we are dealing with the threat of extreme right-wing terrorism and the wider harms caused by the far right, including seeking to deal with community tensions, hate crime and public order issues. This is of course about keeping our communities safe and secure, and there will be many opportunities to discuss this with Ministers in the coming weeks and months.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-28/debates/1ABC698E-B6D2-4AEA-A439-D757138DEC50/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-A9FE79CE-2128-4ECE-B2C2-262ECB6957F8>

## House of Commons Written Answers

### Religious Buildings: Security

**Yasmin Qureshi (Labour)** [235759] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to help safeguard mosques since the attacks on mosques in Birmingham on 20 March 2019; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Atkins:** Police continue to protect places of worship as part of their core activity particularly in relation to hate crime. Following the events in New Zealand and the attacks on mosques in Birmingham, local police have increased patrolling and security measures around mosques and other places of worship to enhance safety and reassure the public.

Last week, we announced an uplift of funding for the next year of the Places of Worship Protective Security Fund to £1.6 million. This is double the amount awarded last year. Under the 2016 Hate Crime Action Plan, we committed £2.4m over three years to provide protective security measures to places of worship who have been victim of or are vulnerable to hate crime attacks, and so far we have awarded grants to just under 50 mosques. The Government has also just announced a new £5 million fund over 3 years to provide security training for Places of Worship. We will be working closely with communities and faith leaders to develop this new scheme and deliver it effectively.

Protective security advice is provided by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI). NaCTSO have published sector specific protective security advice and guidance for owners and operators of crowded places sites such as places of worship, to allow them to identify key risks and consider what steps to take. Government continues to work closely with community groups, including Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group and Tell MAMA, as well as through counter extremism coordinators in local authority areas, to provide reassurance to communities and develop understanding of tensions and issues.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-22/235759/>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-get-security-funding-boost>

*The security advice and guidance referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/701910/170614\\_crowded-places-guidance\\_v1a.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/701910/170614_crowded-places-guidance_v1a.pdf)

### Religious Buildings: Security

**Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op)** [236530] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if his Department will allocate additional funding for the security and protection of mosques and Muslim faith schools.

**Victoria Atkins:** Last week, we announced an uplift of funding for the 2019/20 Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme to £1.6 million. This is double the amount awarded in 2018/19. Under the 2016 Hate Crime Action Plan, we committed £2.4m over three years to provide protective security measures to places of worship which have been subject to or are vulnerable to hate crime attacks, and so far we have awarded grants to just under 50 mosques. The 2019/20 scheme was announced as a fourth year of funding in October 2018.

The Home Office also announced last week a new £5 million fund over 3 years to provide security training for Places of Worship in England and Wales. This will enable staff and volunteers to develop the security understanding necessary to

make physical security measures work effectively.

We are already engaging with faith representatives and organisations including the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, Tell Mamma and the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, and will open a consultation shortly to review what more can be and should be done to protect faith communities more widely.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-25/236530/>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-get-security-funding-boost>

## House of Lords Oral Answers

### Meat: Ritual Slaughter and Religious Freedom

**Baroness Ludford (Liberal Democrat):** To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of developments including the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 26 February *Œuvre d'assistance aux bêtes d'abattoirs v Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation*(C-497/17) that meat prepared according to the rules of religious slaughter cannot be classed as organic, what plans they have to encourage a wider debate about the space for practice in accordance with religious rights that respects human rights and equalities laws.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office (Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth):** My Lords, the Government note the judgment that EU law does not authorise the placing of the EU organic production logo on products derived from animals that have been slaughtered in accordance with religious rites without first being stunned. The ruling will apply in the UK but, in any event, since January all UK organic control bodies ceased to certify meat from non-stunned animals as organic.

**Baroness Ludford:** I thank the Minister for that Answer. This ECJ judgment effectively means that those in the Jewish and Muslim communities who wish to purchase kosher or halal meat legally slaughtered without pre-stunning will be unable to buy products with the organic label. I am secular, but I think it is important that religious communities have the right to practise their religion, not just the right to religious belief, as long as human rights and equalities laws are respected. We are seeing not only attacks on places of worship but on matters of dress, male circumcision and time off for religious observance as well as animal slaughter. Room for religious practice is being squeezed. How will the Government promote an honest, open debate in our society about where this is going and where a reasonable settlement lies?

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** The first point I make to the noble Baroness, which I made in my Answer, is that prior to the judgment it was already not possible to buy organic halal or kosher meat from un-stunned animals. That was the practice from January. On her general point about religious freedoms, in this country we have some of the best protections in the world with the Equality Act and the convention on human rights. It is something of which we can be justly proud.

**Lord Forsyth of Drumlean (Conservative):** My Lords, I draw the noble Baroness's attention to yesterday's *Hansard*, where the noble Lord, Lord Hannay, is reported as saying that, "if the Prime Minister's deal goes through ... rulings of the European Court of Justice will be directly applicable in this country ... So we had better get used to it".— [Official Report, 27/3/19; col. 1854.]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Lords, my noble friend has already drawn the noble Baroness's attention to that point. As I have said, this was the pre-existing

practice in this country anyway, and there is no proposal to change the law in this regard.

**Lord Trees (Crossbench):** My Lords, in the UK a substantial amount of meat and meat products from animals killed without stunning and meant for the consumption of certain religious groups finds its way into the general food chain. What are the Government doing to prevent that or to ensure that there is adequate labelling of meat and meat products so that consumers can make an informed choice about what to eat?

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Lords, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has indicated that it will look at labelling in the round to ensure that we take account of consumer demand. Therefore, that is something that we can ensure. It has been perfectly legal to sell kosher and halal meat since the 1930s and that position remains unchanged. The only change is that since January this year—this is not to do with the judgment—it has not been possible for it to be classified in this country as organic.

**Lord Polak (Conservative):** My Lords, I would like to register an interest in that I eat only kosher meat. I understood that labelling meat as organic is about how the animal is reared or fed, not about how it is killed. However, does the Minister agree that mechanical stunning methods are not fool-proof? Why does he think that campaigners often concentrate on shechita, for example? According to Defra, mis-stunning, which can cause an animal distress, affects about 1% of the total poultry slaughtered per annum—9.5 million—when the total number of poultry for the kosher market is just 1 million a year.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Lords, I note what my noble friend says and he is absolutely right: the number of mis-stunning incidents in abattoirs is very low, and that has been the case over a period of time. As I said, there is a delicate balance to be struck here between what might be desirable from an animal sentience point of view and what is desirable from a religious rights point of view. It is a very delicate balance but I think that we have it right in this country. Certainly, my department has had very few representations on this issue; I do not think that it is a major issue with the public.

**The Lord Bishop of Worcester:** My Lords, the noble Baroness's Question is about much more than meat. It was Lord Acton who wrote that religious freedoms are the foundation of political freedoms. Is it not true that the debate for which the noble Baroness is calling is very relevant, despite the record to which the Minister has drawn attention and of which we can be proud? Religious groups are feeling caught between the views of the majority in all sorts of situations and their own religious observance and conviction.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Lords, the right reverend Prelate makes a relevant point about the general issue and about having a debate. A debate may well be something that we should have, although I find it difficult to have it on a question of this nature. I draw the right reverend Prelate's attention to the report of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2015—some three years ago—which indicated a general satisfaction with the balance that we have at the moment. However, I accept that there are issues to be addressed and I personally would welcome such a debate.

**Lord Palmer of Childs Hill (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, the organic farming of animals has nothing to do with religious slaughter. I take on board what the Minister has said but, when he goes round mosques and synagogues, how will he explain to the worshippers that this Government and this country have agreed with European legislation that is both illogical and unfair?

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Lords, the noble Lord knows that I have the utmost respect for him, but I have already made the point that this judgment does not alter practice in this country; that was altered in January when the last organic body indicated that it would not certify as organic products that were not pre-stunned. I have to say to the noble Lord that I have been to hundreds of synagogues

and mosques over the last three years and this has not been raised once.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-03-28/debates/BA865B8E-E080-45A3-8366-8C5C5DE02012/MeatRitualSlaughterAndReligiousFreedom>

The European Court of Justice ruling referred to above can be read at

<http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?jsessionid=6B91D3B9C53647F7671A7F1E4EBB2191?text=&docid=211049&pageIndex=0&doclang=en&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=6555121>

Lord Hannay's comment, referred to above, can be read at

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2019-03-27/debates/9DBCE6DB-DFC2-4ED9-9229-78C64C2B9196/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Act2018\(ExitDay\)\(Amendment\)Regulations2019#contribution-9F5017AD-CB85-47FD-AA85-786AFEE33A39](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2019-03-27/debates/9DBCE6DB-DFC2-4ED9-9229-78C64C2B9196/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Act2018(ExitDay)(Amendment)Regulations2019#contribution-9F5017AD-CB85-47FD-AA85-786AFEE33A39)

The EHRC report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-97-review-of-equality-and-human-rights-law-relating-to-religion-or-belief.pdf>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Voluntary Schools: Governing Bodies

**Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town (Labour)** [HL14649] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they collect information on the diversity of religion or belief amongst school governors in voluntary-aided schools that select 100 per cent of their pupils based on their religion; and what assessment, if any, they have made of the impact of the religious diversity of these school governors on local social cohesion and integration.

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The Department for Education does not collect any data on the religion or belief of school governors. We expect governors to play an important role in ensuring that schools promote community cohesion and fundamental British values.

The department is committed to increasing the diversity of school and academy governance boards and we are supporting the joint Inspiring Governance and the National Governance Association "Everyone on board" programme to help achieve this.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-19/HL14649/>

### Voluntary Schools: Capital Investment

**Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town (Labour)** [HL14650] To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of expressions of interest in the new capital funding scheme for voluntary-aided schools were for schools with a religious character; and what is the number of those expressions of interest broken down by faith group.

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The capital scheme for voluntary-aided schools is designed to be small. Registering an interest in the scheme prior to submitting a bid for funding was not compulsory.

As well as exploratory discussions with stakeholders, we received expressions of interest for 22 new voluntary-aided schools, 19 of which we have the details of the proposed religious character. We received expressions of interest by faith group as follows:

Faith type	Number of expressions of interest received
Christian Church of England	4
Christian Catholic	6
Christian other/no denomination	2

Hindu	3
Jewish	1
Muslim	3
Other (no faith given)	3

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-19/HL14650/>

## House of Commons Library

### Briefing: Hate Crime Statistics

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8537/CBP-8537.pdf>

## Scottish Parliament Written Answers

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22163 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason its publication, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, does not provide information on the (a) type of hate crime or aggravator disaggregated by local authority, (b) characteristics of people involved in the incident or reporting and (c) number of hate incidents that were reported but did not constitute a criminal offence.

**Humza Yousaf:** Statistical and social research publications typically provide a summary of the information available, and as outlined in the report 'Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland', further information may be available on request.

We are able to provide a local authority disaggregation of the information made available in the report on police recorded hate crime by (a) aggravator and (b) type of crime, for 2014-15 to 2017-18. As this information requires 64 tables to produce, a copy has been placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (Bib. Number 60542).

The report also outlined that further information on the nature of each hate crime the police deal with is recorded in Police Scotland's Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD). This includes the characteristics of those involved and information on hate incidents that were reported to the police but did not constitute a criminal offence.

Prior to any dissemination of a wider range of data collected within the IVPD (e.g. characteristics of those involved), Police Scotland have been reviewing the process used by officers to enter this information into the database. This is with the aim of ensuring that should more detailed analysis on the nature of hate crime be regularly drawn from the IVPD, users can be assured of its quality.

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to engage with Police Scotland as they take this work forward, and will inform users through the SCOTSTAT network [1] of any new developments regarding the availability of hate crime information. I have raised this issue directly with the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority and the Chief Constable.

[1] Network for users and providers of Scottish Official Statistics

(<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22163>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/y4gbru45>

The local authority disaggregation referred to above can be read at [https://www.scojec.org/pad/2019/files/spice\\_bib\\_60542.pdf](https://www.scojec.org/pad/2019/files/spice_bib_60542.pdf)

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22164 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason its report, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, was published after the closing date for its consultation on hate crime legislation.

**Humza Yousaf:** Decisions on the timing of statistical and social research publications are a matter for the independent analysts producing these reports. The timetable for the Scottish Government's consultation on hate crime legislation was not a factor in the date chosen for publication of the report 'Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland', which was published shortly after being finalised by analysts.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22164>

The report referred to above can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/y4qbru45>

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22165 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government, regarding its publication, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, whether it is possible to determine how many of the crimes or offences counted as hate crimes with multiple aggravators had a race aggravation.

**Humza Yousaf:** The information requested has been provided in the following table.

Table: Hate crimes recorded by the police with a race aggravator, 2014-15 to 2017-18

Aggravator	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Total (Race)</b>	5,178	4,926	4,687	4,765
<b>Race (only)</b>	4,967	4,666	4,435	4,491
<b>Multiple Aggravators of which one is Race</b>	211	260	252	274
<b>Race &amp; Religion</b>	134	153	154	160
<b>Other (including Race)</b>	77	107	98	114

Source: Additional analysis of the extract of data from the Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD) used to produce the report 'Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland'

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-information-hate-crime-recorded-police-scotland/>)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22165>

The report referred to above can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/y4qbru45>

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22166 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government, regarding its publication, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, and racist hate crimes, whether it is possible to determine how many crimes or offences were charged under Section 50A of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995.

**Humza Yousaf:** Table 3 (Hate crimes recorded by the police, by type of crime, 2014-15 to 2017-18) in the report 'Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded

by the Police in Scotland' shows the number of hate crimes recorded in the Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD) under Section 50A of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995 (Racially aggravated conduct and Racially aggravated harassment). This is not the same as the number of charges reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). This information is published in Table 1a of the *Hate Crime in Scotland 2017-18 Official Statistics* [1] produced by COPFS (provided in the following table).

It should be noted that a very small number of the charges shown in the following table relate to Sections 18, 19 or 23(1)a of the Public Order Act 1986 (fewer than 10 in any single year). For disclosure reasons these have not been disaggregated, and as such the vast majority of the charges shown below will relate to Section 50A of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995.

Table: Race crime charges reported under Section 50A of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995 or Section 18, 19 or 23(1)a of the Public Order Act 1986

Financial year	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of charges	2,574	2,792	2,376	2,300	1,969	1,757	1,462	1,370

Source: Hate Crime in Scotland 2017-18, COPFS

[1] <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/publications/equality-and-diversity>

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22166>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/y4qbru45>

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22167 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason its publication, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, does not include protected characteristic information related to victims or perpetrators, as committed to in its publication, *National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland 2017-2018*, and as previously available in the report, *Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland*.

**Reply from Humza Yousaf:** As outlined in the report '*Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*', further information on the nature of each hate crime the police deal with is recorded in Police Scotland's Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD). For example, this includes the age, gender and ethnicity of those involved, and the perceived motivations of the perpetrator.

It should be noted that a person does not need to be a member of a particular social group to be the victim of a hate crime. The law states that the identity of the victim is irrelevant as to whether something is a hate crime or not; the motivation of the perpetrator is the key factor in defining a hate crime. As such, Police Scotland do not generally collect information on whether or not a victim is a member of a particular social group in relation to the protected characteristics (with the exception of their ethnicity). Furthermore, the functionality of the IVPD does not currently allow victims to be distinguished from those reporting a hate crime to the police (where these are two different people). This is similar to the previous Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland statistics.

Following publication of the *Recorded Crime in Scotland 2017-2018 National Statistics*, and while collaborating on the report '*Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*', Police Scotland fed back that further work was required on the more detailed information recorded in the IVPD on hate

crime, prior to its dissemination. Police Scotland have been reviewing the process used by officers to enter this information into the database, with the aim of ensuring that should more detailed analysis on the nature of hate crime be regularly drawn from the IVPD, users can be assured of its quality.

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to engage with Police Scotland as they take this work forward, and will inform users through the SCOTSTAT network [1] of any new developments regarding the availability of hate crime information.

I have raised this issue directly with the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority and the Chief Constable.

[1] Network for users and providers of Scottish Official Statistics

(<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22167>

"Recorded Crime in Scotland", referred to above, can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/yx9yruzs>

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22168 John Finnie (Green):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason its publication, *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, does not include information on the (a) location of the crime or offence, (b) relevant date, (c) method of reporting the incident and (d) number of previous incidents reported by the victim/complainer, as previously available in the report, *Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland*.

**Humza Yousaf:** As outlined in the report *Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*, further information on the nature of each hate crime the police deal with is recorded in Police Scotland's Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD).

Prior to any dissemination of a wider range of data collected within the IVPD, Police Scotland have been reviewing the process used by officers to enter this information into the database. This is with the aim of ensuring that should more detailed analysis on the nature of hate crime be regularly drawn from the IVPD, users can be assured of its quality.

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to engage with Police Scotland as they take this work forward, and will inform users through the SCOTSTAT network [1] of any new developments regarding the availability of hate crime information.

[1] Network for users and providers of Scottish Official Statistics

(<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22168>

### Hate Crime

**S5W-22190 Daniel Johnson (Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason Police Scotland has not published a disaggregation of hate crime incidents since 2013-14, and when it will resume doing so.

**Humza Yousaf:** Police Scotland have never published a regular disaggregation of hate crime incidents. When the Scottish Government last published *Official Statistics on Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland* [1], we outlined for users our plan to investigate the availability of information on a wider range of hate-related activity – which covered other groups beyond race.

In February 2019, following joint work by Scottish Government statisticians and

Police Scotland, the Scottish Government published a progress report on this topic titled '*Developing Information on Hate Crime Recorded by the Police in Scotland*' [2]. This included summary information on hate crime recorded by the police for each of the four years from 2014-15 to 2017-18, in relation to race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity.

The report also outlined that further information on the nature of each hate crime the police deal with is recorded in Police Scotland's Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (IVPD), for example the characteristics of the people involved.

Prior to any dissemination of a wider range of data collected within the IVPD, Police Scotland have been reviewing the process used by officers to enter this information into the database. This is with the aim of ensuring that should more detailed analysis on the nature of hate crime be regularly drawn from the IVPD, users can be assured of its quality.

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to engage with Police Scotland as they take this work forward, and will inform users through the SCOTSTAT network [[3] of any new developments regarding the availability of hate crime information.

I have raised this issue directly with the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority and the Chief Constable.

[1]<https://www.gov.scot/publications/racist-incidents-recorded-police-scotland-2013-14/>

[2] <https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-information-hate-crime-recorded-police-scotland/>

[3] Network for users and providers of Scottish Official Statistics  
(<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat> )

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-22190>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **Israeli Settlements: Jerusalem**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14629] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the violent seizure of a Palestinian home in the Old City of Jerusalem by Israeli settlers who were supported by the Israeli police on 5 March.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised the specific case in question, we condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians and have stressed the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-18/HL14629/>

#### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14630] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the refusal of that country to allow Palestinian farmers to access their land and the subsequent destruction of that land by Israeli settlers using bulldozers.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to raise with our Israeli counterparts our

concerns about the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related activity.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-18/HL14630/>

### **Israel: Elections**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14631] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the banning of the alliance of Israeli Arab parties from fielding candidates in April's general election.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are not planning to make representations as this is a matter for the Israeli authorities. We have discussed with our international partners, including Israel, the importance of free, fair and pluralistic elections in upholding the principle and practice of democracy.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-18/HL14631/>

### **Jerusalem: Religious Freedom**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14632] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel regarding freedom of worship in Jerusalem following the sealing of the door of a mosque by Israeli settlers.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to encourage Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan to do all they can to work together to continue to uphold the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem. We are committed to working with all parties to maintain calm, avoid provocation and ensure the safety and the security of the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount compound and all who worship there.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-18/HL14632/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14633] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 11 March (HL14070), what action they will now take to protect such Palestinian children in line with international law.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have made clear to Israel our concerns about the use of live ammunition by the Israel Defence Forces to respond to protests in Gaza. In particular we have stressed the importance of protecting children. Where instances of wrongdoing is found, we have made clear that those responsible should be held to account. We regularly raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities about their treatment of Palestinian minors, in particular those in Israeli military detention.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-18/HL14633/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-02-26/HL14070/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL14679] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel about the confiscation of Palestinian security cameras during raids in Palestinian communities by Israeli forces.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli Government. We repeatedly make clear to the Israeli authorities our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israeli Defence Forces police the

Palestinian communities. While we recognise Israel's legitimate need to deploy security measures, we encourage them to deploy these in a way which minimises tension. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-19/HL14679/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative)** [HL14700] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the deterioration in conditions at the Bethlehem Checkpoint 300; and whether they have raised with the government of Israel any issues about the humanitarian situation at that Checkpoint.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised this particular case, we remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank. Through our Embassy in Tel Aviv we have lobbied the Israeli authorities on the issue of freedom of movement and access on numerous recent occasions, including recently raising checkpoint closures.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-20/HL14700/>

## **Scottish Parliament Motion**

**S5M-16637 Claudia Beamish (Labour): Towards an Independent Palestinian State, a Scottish Proposal** – That the Parliament notes calls for action towards an independent Palestinian state; recognises Britain's historical responsibilities in Palestine and Israel and notes the view that British engagement is needed for a better future; acknowledges Scotland's role in influencing Britain to act for true equality, promoting a policy based on those universal values that Britain helped enshrine in international law; commends the work of the Balfour Project in advancing the education of the British public in the history of Britain's involvement in the Middle East, and notes calls, including from people in the South Scotland region, for six measures to be taken, which are an end to the closure of Gaza, freedom of worship for all believers, respect for the rule of law, accountability, recognition of the State of Palestine alongside Israel and a UK Government commitment to defend the fundamental rights of both peoples.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-16637>

## **United Nations**

### **Briefing Palestinian Rights Committee, Observer says International Community's Inaction, 'Blanket' Support by United States Emboldens Israeli Occupation**

Updating the Palestinian Rights Committee on recent developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the observer for the State of Palestine today cautioned that the international community's inaction, blanket support from the United States President and hate speech by Israeli politicians in the run-up to Israel's presidential elections in April has emboldened the occupying Power.

Briefing the Committee ... Feda Abdelhady-Nasser underscored that ... the situation in the Territory has continued to decline and the paralysis of the Council is due to the obstruction of one member whose complicity with Israel has strengthened the occupation. ...

Ongoing human rights violations against the Palestinians have become more flagrant, as Israel believes it can avoid accountability, she said. In Gaza, more people are suffering

and despair has deepened. Air strikes in the past week, alongside escalating threats and rhetoric, have added to the combustibility of the situation. ...

Israel also has illegally withheld Palestinian tax revenues, destabilizing the economic situation and leading to austerity measures. ...

Carmelo Inguanez (Malta), Committee Rapporteur, provided a briefing on the Committee's recent visit to Brussels ... During the visit, the delegation appealed to the European Union to be proactive within the existing parameters of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — without waiting for the United States' peace plan — by playing a more active role within the Middle East Quartet, and for Union members to recognize the State of Palestine as a way to promote the peace process. The delegation also sought the European Union's support to hold Israel accountable for its violations of international law and to implement the European Union policy of differentiation regarding products imported from Israel's illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/gapal1422.doc.htm>

TOP

## Foreign Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### Racial Discrimination

**Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated)** [HL14721] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking following comments by the Prime Minister of New Zealand calling for a global response to tackle racism.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The shocking attack by a terrorist, who targeted Muslims in Christchurch while they were praying, underscores the need for us all to continue our work to tackle hatred head on. As the Prime Minister has said, there can be no place in our societies for the vile ideology that drives and incites hatred and fear. The events in New Zealand must strengthen our resolve on this issue.

On racism, the Government is committed, both domestically and internationally, to eliminating any form of racial discrimination. At home, our focus is on creating a fair society where all people, regardless of ethnic origin or background, are valued and able to participate fully and realise their own potential. Internationally, we believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle injustices and advocate for respect amongst different ethnic groups is to encourage countries to uphold their human rights obligations, including by working with international institutions, such as the United Nations. For example, the UK strongly supports the work of UN special procedure mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and we encourage other States to also support their work. The UK continues to engage on resolutions which consider racism, and work with member states at a ministerial and official level.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-20/HL14721/>

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>

#### **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 3 days**

**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