

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs
Israel

Relevant Legislation
Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answers

Religion: Education

Mike Kane (Labour) [284143] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations have been received by his Department on the provision of RE teaching in schools as part of a broad and balanced curriculum; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb: The Department receives regular representation on the matter of religious education (RE). For example, I attended a panel discussion at the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE on 16 July.

All state funded schools are required by legislation or by their funding agreements to teach RE to all registered pupils aged 5 to 18 years. Teaching RE is also central to the duty on state schools to teach a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284143/>

Marriage: Humanism

Andrea Jenkens (Conservative) [284951] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of immediately laying an order under Section 14 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 to give legal recognition to humanist marriages rather than waiting for the outcome of the Law Commission's review into that matter.

Wendy Morton: The Law Commission review that the Government announced this June is a fundamental review of the law on how and where people can legally marry in England and Wales. As part of that review, the Government invited the Law Commission to make recommendations about how marriage by humanist and other non-religious belief organisations could be incorporated into a revised or new scheme for all marriages that is simple, fair and consistent. The Government will decide on provision on the basis of the Law Commission's recommendations.

Assessment of the potential merits of provision for non-religious belief marriages can be found in the consultation paper and response published by a previous Government in 2014 and available at justice.gov.uk.

Exercising the power in section 14 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

to provide for legally binding non-religious belief marriage, including humanist marriage, would provide a freedom to marry in a way that would not be available to many other people who wish to marry. That is why the Government asked the Law Commission to carry out a fundamental review of the law on how and where couples can marry. It is a law that has been added to over several centuries without any systematic reform.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284951/>

Hate Crime: Sports

Rosena Allin-Khan (Labour) [280438] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what funding the Government has allocated to tackle hate speech in sport; and what proportion of that funding has been spent, in each of the last five years.

Nigel Adams: It is not possible to isolate government funding to tackle hate speech in sport. Government and its arm's length body for grassroots sport, Sport England, work with National Governing Bodies of Sport and organisations such as Kick It Out, Stonewall and Women in Football to tackle discrimination in local, national and international sport. Grassroots sports clubs can also access free support and learning in tackling discrimination through Sport England's "Club Matters" programme.

There is no place in sport or society more generally for any acts of discrimination, including hate speech. Sports clubs and fans must continue to embrace diversity and report incidents of discrimination wherever it occurs.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-22/280438/>

TOP

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Embassies

Richard Burden (Labour) [285192] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what contingency planning is being undertaken by his Department on the potential relocation of the UK Embassy in Israel; and when the results of that contingency planning will be made available to Ministers.

Andrew Murrison: The British Embassy to Israel is based in Tel Aviv and we have no plans to move it. Our position on the status of Jerusalem is clear and long-standing: it should be determined in a negotiated settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and Jerusalem should ultimately be the shared capital of the Israeli and Palestinian states.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/285192/>

Darfur: Peace Negotiations

David Drew (Labour Co-op) [285092] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions has he had with his Israeli counterpart on (a) the presence of Abdul Wahid from Darfur residing in Israel and (b) the objective of peace-building in Jebba Marra mountains.

Andrew Murrison: We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this issue. The UK continues to support peace in Darfur. We encourage all sides to

engage in constructive dialogue to find a fair, comprehensive and sustainable solution for all people in Darfur and Sudan.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/285092/>

Palestinians: Health Professions

Helen Hayes (Labour) [284485] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help tackle the issue of impunity for attacks against health workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Andrew Murrison: The UK is clear that no health workers or aid workers should be at risk of violence and that they must have the protection they need from the responsible authorities to allow them to do their jobs in safety. We regularly raise with the Government of Israel the urgent need to ease access and movement restrictions on Gaza, including for health workers. We also stress the importance of protecting civilians, especially children and medical personnel. We call on Israel to adhere to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284485/>

Palestinians: Health Professions

Helen Hayes (Labour) [284488] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the extent to which Israel's internal investigations into the killings of Palestinian health workers comply with international standards of independence, impartiality, promptness, thoroughness and transparency.

Andrew Murrison: While we have not made an assessment of this matter, we have stressed to Israel the need for independent and transparent investigations of deaths. We are deeply concerned by deaths and injuries of civilians in Gaza over the last year. We urge the Israeli Government to publish the findings of the investigations launched by the Military Attorney General on 13 March. The UK remains concerned about the use of live ammunition and excessive force by the Israel Defense Forces. While Israel has the right to self-defence, it is vital that its actions are proportionate and seek to avoid civilian casualties.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284488/>

Gaza: Health Professions

Helen Hayes (Labour) [284767] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that medical workers in Gaza can perform their humanitarian functions without risk of attack.

Andrew Murrison: We are concerned by the report on attacks on health workers and healthcare facilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, in particular in Gaza. We regularly raise our concerns about the situation with the Israeli Government, pressing them on the need for a long-term strategy to improve humanitarian conditions. We are clear that medical staff and services should have the protection that allows them to do their jobs in safety.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284767/>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Helen Hayes (Labour) [284768] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that when

attacks on humanitarian workers occur in Gaza those responsible for those attacks are held to account.

Andrew Murrison: The UK supports an investigation which establishes the facts about the violence in Gaza related to recent protests. Given the importance of accountability, we urge that any investigation be independent and transparent, that its findings be made public, and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-09-02/284768/>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

Domestic Abuse Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/domesticabuse.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>

TOP

Consultations ** new or updated today

Islamophobia in Scotland (closing date 30 September 2019)

<https://forms.ncl.ac.uk/view.php?id=13027>

TOP

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