



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Middle East: Peace Negotiations

Steve Double (Conservative) [252592] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for the Middle East Peace Process of the rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel.

Andrew Murrison: Indiscriminate attacks against civilians are unacceptable and unjustifiable, and make peace harder to achieve. The UK fully supports Israel's right to self-defence and to defend its citizens from such acts of terror. Ultimately, the ongoing decision by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad to embrace violence and reject the Quartet principles lies at the heart of the Gaza situation. Hamas and other terrorist groups must cease all actions that are violent or provocative, or that put civilian lives at risk.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-09/252592/>

Middle East: Peace Negotiations

Ian Paisley (DUP) [252060] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on prospects for the Middle East peace process.

Andrew Murrison: The United Kingdom remains a strong supporter of efforts to promote peace in the Middle East. We are in regular conversations with partners about the best way to advance prospects for peace. The Acting Minister for the Middle East discussed prospects for peace with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 30 April and the Palestinian Head of Mission in the UK on 9 May.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-08/252060/>

Gaza: Hamas

Ian Paisley (DUP) [252061] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the Hamas Government in Gaza on political stability in the region.

Andrew Murrison: The UK remains very concerned about the situation in Gaza

and any actions by Hamas which increase instability. We utterly condemn rocket fire from by Hamas and other militants in Gaza; Palestinians and Israelis deserve to live in safety and peace. Hamas must renounce violence, recognise Israel and accept previously signed agreements. Hamas' military wing has been proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the UK since 2001 and the UK retains a policy of no contact with Hamas in its entirety. We regularly raise our concerns about the situation in Gaza with the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority, pressing them on the need for a long-term strategy to improve economic and political conditions, and urging them to work together to see long-term improvements. We are supportive of Hamas-Fatah reconciliation attempts, and of the PA returning to resume government functions in Gaza, helping to improve the dire humanitarian and economic situation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-08/252061/>

Middle East: Hezbollah

Ian Paisley (DUP) [252062] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the level of the security threat posed by Hezbollah to (a) Israel and (b) the Middle East.

Andrew Murrison: The British Government has serious concerns about the actions and behaviours of Hizballah in the Middle East. Its continued role in Syria, amassing of weapons outside of state control and, therefore, the lack of distinction between its political and military wings is what led the Home Secretary to extend proscription of Hizballah to the entirety of the organisation. Most recently, former Minister, Alistair Burt, raised this during his visit to Lebanon in March this year, when he expressed his concerns over Hezbollah's regional role.

Hizballah has been proscribed in its entirety since March and the UK has long had a no contact policy with the whole organisation.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-08/252062/>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Jeremy Hunt: Tremors, turbulence & terror in Mid East remind us of urgent need for peace: two-state solution. But the foundations for peace are respect & coexistence. Boycotting Israel — the world's only Jewish state — is antisemitic. I salute Germany for taking stand.

https://twitter.com/Jeremy_Hunt/status/1129736648890159109

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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>

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>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Scottish Human Rights Commission Draft Strategic Plan (closing date 28 June 2019)

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/1860/strategic-plan-consultation-vfinal-eh.docx>

Online Harms White Paper (closing date 1 July 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper>

Opt-out organ donation: organs and tissues excluded from the new system (closing date 22 July 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/opt-out-organ-donation-organs-and-tissues-excluded-from-the-new-system>

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