



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-17450 Bill Kidd (SNP): Tea with a Refugee** – That the Parliament commends the efforts of the High School of Glasgow for providing a welcoming environment for refugees; congratulates the Holocaust Educational Trust for its thoughtful awareness of the ongoing tragedy of refugees across the world, and wishes the school and the trust the very best at the "Tea with a Refugee" event, which is being held on 12 June 2019 at the school.  
<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-17450>

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256923] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2019 to Question 248581 on the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, for what reason that Answer did not provide the dates on which the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation had discussions with representatives of the (a) Royal Parks, (b) Department of Culture, Media and Sport and (c) Westminster City Council.

**Heather Wheeler:** No central log exists of engagements with representatives of The Royal Parks, Department of Culture, Media and Sport and Westminster City Council.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256923/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248581/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256924] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2019 to Question 248582 on the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, in what form the Government received the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's recommendation of 13 January 2016 that the Holocaust Memorial and the Holocaust Learning Centre should be located in Victoria Tower Gardens; and if he will place a copy of that recommendation in the Library.

**Heather Wheeler:** The decision to recommend Victoria Tower Gardens was taken at a Holocaust Foundation Board meeting on 13 January. The Prime Minister accepted that recommendation and announced Victoria Tower Gardens as the chosen location on 27 January 2016. The minutes of the Board meetings are the property of the Foundation which is an independent advisory body.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256924/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-04-29/248582/>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-holocaust-memorial-design-competition-tell-us-what-you-think>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256925] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2017 to Question 106178 on the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, on what date in autumn 2015 the possibility of locating the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens was first raised officially with the Government by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

**Heather Wheeler:** Discussions with officials about possible sites took place during the autumn of 2015. The exact date when Victoria Tower Gardens was first discussed is not recorded.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256925/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-10-06/106178/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256926] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answers of 16 October 2017 to Question 106178 and 14 March 2019 to Question 229625 on the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, whether Victoria Tower Gardens was identified by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation as one of the almost 50 sites as a possible location for the Holocaust Memorial between 7 September 2015 and 30 October 2015.

**Heather Wheeler:** The answer to Question UIN 229625 makes clear that Victoria Tower Gardens was suggested as a possible site after 30 October 2015, once other sites had been dismissed as not meeting the criteria.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256926/>

*The answers referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-10-06/106178/>

*and*

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

### **United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation**

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256927] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on what dates from (a) 26 October 2015 to (b) 13 January 2016 the Prime Minister had meetings with (i) the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation and (ii) members of that Foundation; and which members attended each of those meetings.

**Heather Wheeler:** The Prime Minister had no meetings with the Holocaust Memorial Foundation in that period but did meet with members of the Holocaust Commission in January 2016 for a one year on progress report.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256927/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256928] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much is being paid from the public purse to Big Ideas for providing public relations and publicity services for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; which budget that funding is allocated from; and what the scope is of the services Big Ideas is so providing.

**Heather Wheeler:** Big Ideas are supporting public engagement, drawing especially on their experience in reaching groups whose voice is often not heard by decision-makers. A budget of £118,000 has been allocated.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256928/>

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

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [256929] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229625 on the National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service, which of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's criteria of September 2015 for the location of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre the proposed location at the Imperial War Museum was deemed not to meet.

**Heather Wheeler:** The UKHMF believed that the location close to Parliament of the Memorial and Learning Centre was an important statement about the importance of democracy as a protector against tyrants. Most of the important decisions relating to Britain's reaction to the Holocaust were taken near the site. Consequently no other site came close to Victoria Tower Gardens in symbolism or significance. The Government agreed with the recommendation that Victoria Tower Gardens was the most fitting location.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/256929/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

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

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## House of Lords Written Answers

### **Gaza: Israel**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL15750] To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the prediction made in the report by the Office of the UN's Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Jerusalem, Gaza in 2020: A Liveable Place?, published in 2012, that Gaza would be unfit for human inhabitation by 2020.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK remains deeply concerned by the situation in Gaza and the report in question's prediction that Gaza could become uninhabitable by 2020. UK aid has supported economic development, provision of basic services, and enabled reconstruction through support to the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism. The Minister of State for the Middle East (the Rt Hon Andrew Murrison) visited Gaza on 28 May 2019 and saw the extent of this first hand.

However, as the report makes clear, aid alone cannot solve the problems in Gaza. Improvements in infrastructure, employment, energy and water are essential to improve living conditions. The Government will continue to urge all the parties to take the necessary practical steps to improve conditions. We will continue to press for a sustainable political solution for Gaza and to address the underlying cause of humanitarian strife in Gaza by more than doubling the amount of UK aid spent on economic development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to around £38 million over the next five years (2018-2023). This will include support to addressing the water and electricity crisis and seek to address movement and access restrictions.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-05-14/HL15750/>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/publications/gaza/Gaza%20in%202020.pdf>

### **Palestinians: Recognition of States**

**Lord Judd (Labour)** [HL15770] To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they use to judge when the recognition of the state of Palestine would be appropriate.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement, the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. The UK is strongly committed to a two-state solution as the best way to bring about stability and peace in the region.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-05-15/HL15770/>

## Foreign and Commonwealth Office

**Andrew Murrison:** Inspiring to meet British & Israeli participants at the landmark Veteran Games with @PresidentRuvi. Incredible stories of achievement over adversity. The Games are held in support of physical and mental healing, and were inspired by the UK's @WeAreInvictus #VeteransGames

<https://twitter.com/AWMurrison/status/1134010023649128449>

**Andrew Murrison:** Great to meet new Palestinian PM & @SussexUni graduate @DrShtayyeh today. Important discussions on #MEPP, PA stability & bilateral relations. Reiterated UK support for two-state solution with #Jerusalem as a shared capital  
<https://twitter.com/AWMurrison/status/1133841935213432833>

## United Nations

### **Secretary-General Urges Avoidance of Further Incidents, Escalation in Golan**

... The Secretary-General is concerned by the developments in the Golan on 27 May. He calls on the parties to the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement to respect the terms of the Agreement and to closely liaise with the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) to prevent any further incidents and escalation of the situation.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19605.doc.htm>

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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