

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs
Israel

Relevant Legislation
Consultations

Home Affairs

Government Equalities Office

Government sets out next steps for opposite-sex civil partnerships

... we have published our plans for extending civil partnerships to opposite sex couples by the end of this year. We are also launching a consultation on how to ensure couples in England and Wales can access the form of legal union that best suits them. ...

Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt, said: "There are all sorts of reasons why people may choose not to marry, but for a long time it has been the only option for many wanting the legal security it provides.

"Last year the Prime Minister announced government would support the extension of civil partnerships to opposite-sex couples. This is a fantastic step, providing an alternative to marriage for these couples. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-next-steps-for-opposite-sex-civil-partnerships>

TOP

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Medicine: Israel

Jim Shannon (DUP) [271463] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing co-operation between medical R&D facilities in the UK and Israel.

Andrew Murrison: The UK and Israel are co-operating in a wide range of areas in medical R&D, with many successful partnerships across academia and business. The Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange Partnership has supported medical collaboration over the last seven years, distributing 19 grants for joint research excellence totalling over £8 million. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv and the

British Council manage the programme with private funding raised from a diverse coalition of non-Government organisations. In 2018 the British and Israeli Governments signed an agreement covering a two year £4 million bilateral programme to support business-to-business R&D collaboration between Israeli and UK companies. Projects to receive funding will be announced later this month with a number of medical R&D projects in contention. The UK-Israel Tech Hub at our Embassy also helps to create tech and innovation partnerships across several sectors, including healthcare. One of their projects, the UK-Israel Dangoor Healthcare Initiative, aims to create a pipeline of digital innovation for the NHS. We are currently exploring further opportunities to expand cooperation in medical R&D.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-01/271463/>

Israel: Hebron

Lisa Nandy (Labour) [271514] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2019 to Question 263894 on Israel: Hebron, if he will make representations to the Israeli Government on reports of tear gas canisters being fired at schools in Hebron by Israeli armed forces.

Andrew Murrison: We regularly raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities about Israel's use of force in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-01/271514/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-06-12/263894/>

Israeli Settlements: Companies

Lisa Nandy (Labour) [271545] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will reconsider the Government's opposition to listing in the UN business and human rights database of companies involved in settlement-related activities in the Palestinian Territories.

Andrew Murrison: We have no plans to reconsider our involvement in the UN business and human rights database. We continue to believe that the database goes beyond the competence of the Human Rights Council. Human rights obligations are directed at states, and not individuals or businesses. Ultimately it is the decision of an individual or company whether to operate in settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The British Government neither encourages nor offers support to such activity.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-01/271545/>

Israel: Trade Agreements

Lisa Nandy (Labour) [271552] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Territories will be included in the future free trade agreement between the UK and Israel.

Andrew Murrison: The UK and Israel have a strong and important trading relationship. We do not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories as part of Israel and therefore they are not covered by the EU-Israel Association Agreement which currently governs our trade with Israel, nor the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement which will govern our trade after the UK leaves the EU. Products from Israeli settlements do not receive preferential tariff treatment under either Agreement.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-01/271552/>

Gaza: Reconstruction

John Lamont (Conservative) [272238] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of processes to prevent the misuse of reconstruction material in Gaza.

Andrew Murrison: Following the review of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) by the UN, Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority in February 2018, and the implementation of improvements in January 2019, we assess that the GRM and, in particular, its Programme Monitoring Unit (PMU) has effective processes to monitor the entry and use of construction materials in Gaza. DFID has recently committed a further £700,000 to the PMU over the next two years. This support will be an important part of efforts to alleviate shelter and basic service needs which were exacerbated by the 2014 conflict and help stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-02/272238/>

[TOP](#)

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

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

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>

**** Civil Partnerships: Next Steps Conversion** (closing date 20 August 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/civil-partnerships-next-steps-and-consultation-on-conversion>

Regulation of pre-paid funeral plans (closing date 25 August 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulation-of-pre-paid-funeral-plans-consultation-on-a-policy-proposal>

Islamophobia in Scotland (closing date 26 August 2019)

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

TOP

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