



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Religion and Sex and Relationship Education: Primary Education

Angela Rayner (Labour) [277201] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what role Ofsted will play in ensuring that primary schools comply with (a) relationships education, relationships and sex education and (b) religious education.

Nick Gibb: From September 2019, primary schools will be encouraged to follow the new relationships education curriculum and compliance will be compulsory from September 2020.

Ofsted's role, in relation to schools, is to provide an independent assessment of their effectiveness on a range of matters. This includes the breadth, balance and ambition of the school's curriculum.

As set out in Ofsted's published School Inspection Handbook, from September 2019, inspectors will take account of the relationships education taught in each school as part of an evaluation of pupils' personal development. Inspectors will also take account of the religious education taught, as part of assessing the quality of education provided by the school.

It is not Ofsted's role to inspect denominational religious education in faith schools as part of its inspections. This provision is inspected separately under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-15/277201/>

Religion and Sex and Relationship Education: Primary Education

Angela Rayner (Labour) [277202] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions his Department has had with OFSTED on the teaching of (a) relationships and sex education and (b) religious education in primary schools.

Nick Gibb: The Department has regular discussions with Ofsted on a range of matters concerning the school curriculum.

Ofsted and faith organisations contributed to the relationships and sex education consultation and were part of the round table engagement face to face meetings in

Autumn 2018. The Department is committed to supporting schools to teach all subjects to a high standard and, therefore, will continue to work with subject experts and Ofsted to ensure that schools are well supported.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-15/277202/>

Hezbollah

Joan Ryan (The Independent Group for Change) [277618] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 January 2018 to Question 122667 on Hezbollah, whether his policy on not collecting that data has changed since the Government's decision to proscribe Hezbollah in its entirety in February 2019.

Ben Wallace: The Government's approach to this issue has not changed. Investigations into individuals who may be members or supporters of proscribed organisations are an operational matter for the police and intelligence agencies. The department does not collect data on specific numbers of Hizballah members or supporters in the UK.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277618/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-15/122667/>

Hezbollah

John Spellar (Labour) [277640] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department has taken to tackle the domestic operations of Hezbollah since its full proscription.

Ben Wallace: Investigations into the activities of proscribed terrorist organisations are an operational matter for the police and intelligence agencies. The Government does not comment on intelligence matters.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277640/>

Downing Street

Prime Minister appoints Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith as Office for Tackling Injustices Chair

... Announced by the Prime Minister last week, the OfTI will look at disparities in areas including socio-economic background, ethnicity, gender, disability and LGBT and explore if people from these groups are unfairly discriminated against or held back from getting on in life. ...

Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith said: It's an honour to be appointed the Chair of the Office for Tackling Injustices – a body which will not only drive Government and wider society to take action on social inequality, but which will offer very tangible means of doing so through unparalleled data. The time to take action against the injustices we see all around us in society is right now. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-appoints-baroness-ruby-mcgregor-smith-as-ofti-chair>

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

John Mann appointed as independent adviser on antisemitism

Prime Minister Theresa May has today appointed John Mann as an independent adviser on antisemitism.

Labour MP John Mann, who chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism, will be responsible for providing the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with independent advice on the most effective methods to tackle antisemitism.

He will also collaborate with Lord Pickles, the UK's Special Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, as well as Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion and Belief, to ensure a consistent approach.

Prime Minister Theresa May said: Antisemitism is racism. It has absolutely no place in our society and we must fight its bitter scourge wherever it rears its head.

I've been proud to lead a government that is tackling such discrimination in all its forms – from making sure courts have the powers they need to deal with those who peddle hatred, to asking the Law Commission to undertake a full review of hate crime legislation. But there is yet more to do.

John Mann is, without exception, a key voice on this matter. He has frequently campaigned in the House of Commons on this issue and has tirelessly used his role as a politician to speak out on behalf of victims of anti-Jewish racism.

I am confident he will bring the level of cross-party independent advice needed to advise Government and to ensure we see progress on this very important issue.

John Mann said: If we stay silent on the issue of antisemitism, we unwittingly allow cowardice and bigotry to speak its own repulsive language.

I will continue to call out those throwing stones of hatred at Jewish people, and will endeavour to give a clarion call to Government on prejudice and discrimination on this issue.

Antisemitism in the UK continues to be a cause for concern. The most recent national hate crime statistics published by the Home Office last October showed that Jewish people were the most likely group to experience religiously motivated hate crime.

The Community Security Trust (CST), the leading Jewish organisation monitoring and supporting victims of antisemitism, recorded 1,652 reported antisemitic incidents in 2018 – their highest annual total on record for the third year running.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/john-mann-appointed-as-independent-adviser-on-antisemitism>

Independent expert appointed to tackle Islamophobia

... Imam Qari Asim MBE, Deputy Chair of the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group will lead a process for establishing a definition of Islamophobia. He will be joined by a second adviser to be confirmed in due course.

This new work will build on the definitions of Islamophobia currently being considered, including the APPG definition. It will also draw on a wide range of opinions and work in close collaboration with the cross-government Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, to ensure that it commands broad support within Muslim communities and wider society.

Communities Secretary, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said: The government is wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that Muslims are not targeted for hatred, persecution or discrimination.

Imam Asim's appointment marks a further step in helping us to achieve that goal and ensures that we develop an effective definition of Islamophobia which commands widespread support.

Imam Qari Asim MBE said: To tackle the alarming rise in anti-Muslim sentiment, it is imperative that Islamophobia is defined.

I am deeply committed to working across Muslim communities and with relevant stakeholders to formulate a legally robust, comprehensive and workable definition of Islamophobia.

I am honoured to be entrusted with this role, which will have a far reaching impact in protecting British Muslims and tackling anti-Muslim hatred.

The government agrees there needs to be a formal definition of Islamophobia to help strengthen our efforts against anti-Muslim hatred. But there are questions around the APPG definition, as concerns have been raised that the APPG definition could unintentionally undermine freedom of speech, and prevent legitimate criticism of Islamist extremism, or of unacceptable cultural practices. This is a matter that needs careful consideration. ...

Qari Asim, MBE, is senior Imam at Makkah Mosque in Leeds ...

He is Deputy Chair of government's Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group and was an advisor to the Independent Review into the Application of Sharia Law in England and Wales.

Alongside this, he is Chair of Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board, and Senior Editor of ImamsOnline. ...

The definition will not be legally binding and the appointment of a legal expert will be to ensure that the definition does not conflict with current equalities legislation. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/independent-expert-appointed-to-tackle-islamophobia>

UK Conservative Party

Boris Johnson is Elected as Leader of the Conservative Party

Boris Johnson has been elected as the new leader of the Conservative Party and will be the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. ... he won 92,153 votes. Jeremy Hunt won 46,656 votes.

87.4% of Conservative members voted in the election, and 509 ballots were rejected.

After winning the election, Boris Johnson ... said, "We are going to energize the country – we are going to get Brexit done by October 31st, we're going to take advantage of all the opportunities it will bring in a new spirit of can-do, and we are once again going to believe in ourselves and what we can achieve."

"Like some slumbering giant, we are going to rise and ping off the guy ropes of self-doubt and negativity with better education, better infrastructure, more police, and fantastic full-fibre broadband sprouting in every household. We are going to unite this amazing country and we are going to take it forward."

To read the full press release see

<https://www.conservatives.com/sharethefacts/2019/07/boris-johnson-new-conservative-leader>

UK Labour Party

Antisemitism has no place in our Party. Hatred towards Jewish people has no place in our society.

... Antisemitism is a poison that must be challenged wherever it raises its head. Hatred towards Jewish people has no place in our society.

Our short leaflet aims to provide Labour members and supporters with some basic tools to understand antisemitism so we can defeat it. To confront antisemitism in wider society, we must face up to the unsettling truth that a small number of Labour members hold antisemitic views and a much larger number don't recognise antisemitic stereotypes and

conspiracy theories.

The evidence is clear enough. The worst cases of antisemitism in our party have included Holocaust denial, crude Jewish-banker stereotypes, conspiracy theories blaming Israel for 9/11 or every war on the Rothschild family, and even one member who appeared to believe that Hitler had been misunderstood. ...

There has been a rise in conspiracy theories which see capitalism and imperialism as the product of plots by a small shadowy elite rather than a political, economic, legal and social system. ...

Today, some conspiracy theories substitute Israel or Zionists for Jews, presenting Israel as controlling the world's media and finances. ...

In response to 19th Century European antisemitism, some Jews became advocates for Zionism, Jewish national self-determination in a Jewish state. ... Jewish people have the same right to self-determination as any other people. ... Most British Jews feel connected to some extent to Israel and many have friends and family there. ...

The concepts of Israel, Zion and Jerusalem run deeply in Jewish religion, identity and culture, and for many are symbolic of a homeland, refuge, or place of safety. The sensitivities around these concepts should be considered before using them.

That does not mean limiting legitimate criticism of the Israeli state or its policies or diluting support for the Palestinian people's struggle for justice, their own state, and the rights of refugees and their descendants. The impact that the creation of Israel had and still has on the Palestinian people means the struggle for justice for them and an end to their dispossession is a noble one ...

Labour exists to promote the social liberation of all people. That's why we are launching a programme to educate our members and empower them to confront oppression, wherever it arises. Our first materials will be on antisemitism, recognising that anti-Jewish bigotry has reared its head within our movement. ...

To read the full statement, and links to resources relating to antisemitism, see

<https://labour.org.uk/no-place-for-antisemitism/>

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Holocaust

House of Commons Oral Answers

Topical Questions: Housing, Communities, and Local Government

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire): Just over a week ago, I visited the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany where my children's great grandfather was held by the Nazis after Kristallnacht. He was one of the lucky ones. He was able to leave Germany and be reunited with family, but millions of others were not so fortunate. The visit redoubled my determination to deliver the national holocaust memorial and learning centre.

There is a duty on all of us across the House to stand up against antisemitism, racism and bigotry. Through initiatives such as the communities framework, which we have just published, we must stand up for our shared values of openness, understanding and decency.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-07-22/debates/753D7A5B-6ECE-4615-B359-4E407B85A05F/TopicalQuestions#contribution-BF713EE0-C4B5-4330-8BB7-A475B64A5986>

House of Commons Written Answers

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Peter Bottomley (Conservative) [277606] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the company Big Ideas was appointed in a contested competitive process to work on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial.

Heather Wheeler: No. The Big Ideas Community Interest Company was appointed as they specialise in community engagement and commemoration and have an excellent track record.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277606/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Peter Bottomley (Conservative) [277607] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many views on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial were submitted by the company Big Ideas to the Westminster City Council public comment website.

Heather Wheeler: Westminster City Council has a record of all comments placed on the Westminster City Council Website. All comments were put on the website individually using names and addresses as per the requirement of the Westminster City Council Planning Committee. The portal is open to the public and all comments can be viewed there.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277607/>

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Peter Bottomley (Conservative) [277608] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how the company Big Ideas described the alternatives to the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial project to the groups and individuals with which it interacted.

Heather Wheeler: The Big Ideas Community Interest Company was engaged to encourage local and national conversations on the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277608/>

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House of Commons Written Answers

Overseas Trade: Israel

Jack Lopresti (Conservative) [277705] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what opportunities he has identified for further bilateral trade co-operation with Israel after the UK leaves the EU.

George Hollingbery: The UK and Israel signed a trade continuity agreement in February 2019. The agreement simplifies trade and allows businesses to trade as freely as they do now when the UK leaves the EU, without any additional barriers or tariffs.

Going forward post-Brexit, the British and Israeli governments have established a Working Group to work towards a smooth transition of our trading arrangements

and to plot the course for the future trading relationship between the UK and Israel. Additionally, the UK will be hosting the inaugural UK-Israel Trade and Investment Conference in London this year. This event will showcase the close trading relationship between our two countries and look to the future on areas of opportunity for businesses.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277705/>

The trade continuity agreement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-israel-trade-and-partnership-agreement>

Amin al-Husseini

Joan Ryan (The Independent Group for Change) [277621] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on reports of a description on social media on 4 July 2019 by President Abbas's religious affairs adviser that Haj Amin Al-Husseini is a role model.

Andrew Murrison: The UK strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement on both sides of the conflict. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to avoid engaging in or encouraging any type of action and language that makes it more difficult to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict.

We have an active dialogue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) on their commitment to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and avoid actions that could incite violence or hatred, including an annual assessment of the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding that DFID holds with the PA.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-16/277621/>

The current version of the Memorandum of Understanding referred to above is not available online.

Palestinians: Schools

Joan Ryan (The Independent Group for change) [278333] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 272127, which organisation completed the evaluation; and if he will place a copy of the evaluation in the Library.

Andrew Murrison: The independent evaluation commissioned by the Palestinian Authority (PA) was completed by the Arab European Foundation. DFID is not the owner of the report. Ultimately it will be the decision of the Palestinian Authority whether to make the evaluation public.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-17/278333/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-07-02/272127/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17065] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that a mother of a wanted Palestinian child was abducted and imprisoned in order to pressure that child to turn themselves in for interrogation.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made any representations on this specific issue, we continue to have strong concerns about continued reports of ill-treatment of Palestinian minors and to seek improvements to Israeli practices. We continue to urge Israel to provide the necessary protections for Palestinian children living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and to fulfil their obligations under international law.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17065/>

Israel: Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17066] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 4 July (HL16619), whether they expect the government of Israel to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; if so, when; and what steps they are taking, with international partners, to encourage that government to join that treaty.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government continues to support the universalisation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as recently set out in the UK's draft National Report to NPT's 2019 Third Preparatory Committee. While we are not aware of any current plans by Israel to accede to the NPT, the Government will continue to urge Israel, and all States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17066/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-06-24/HL16619/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17067] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Israeli authorities are withholding the bodies of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces until certain conditions have been met, including the payment of 25,000 shekels.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made an assessment of this issue. We urge all sides to treat casualties and the dead with respect and urge Israel to return any bodies they are holding.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17067/>

Jerusalem: Excavation

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17068] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any damage to Palestinian homes and the al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem caused by tunnels created by archaeological excavations beneath them.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made an assessment of this issue, we regularly make clear our serious concerns about the situation in East Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and in co-operation with EU partners. We are strongly opposed to any attempts to change the facts on the ground in the East Jerusalem.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17068/>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17069] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel following reports that Israel's High Court of Justice refused to hear an Israeli human rights organisation's petition that Palestinian minors held in Israeli prisons should be allowed to call their parents.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not raised the specific issue, we continue to have strong concerns about continued reports of ill-treatment of Palestinian minors in Israeli military detention. We continue to make representations to the Israeli authorities on this issue and we remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding Palestinian children in detention in Israel. I discussed this issue in Parliament on 8 July, and officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv last raised our concerns with the Israeli Ministry of Justice on 6 June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17069/>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL17070] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that it allowed a settler organisation to acquire the home of a Palestinian family in Silwan, East Jerusalem, following their eviction.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made any representations on this specific issue, we continue to be gravely concerned by the impact of demolitions and evictions on ordinary Palestinians and the impact this has on the viability of a future Palestinian state. Demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians; call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution; and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. On 26 April the EU issued a statement, on behalf of the UK and other EU Member States, requesting that Israel reconsider the pending demolition orders in Silwan. We fund a number of projects to monitor and report on settlement expansion in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and to protect vulnerable Palestinian communities from the effects of settlement expansion.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-09/HL17070/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/jordan/61531/local-eu-statement-demolition-palestinian-property-east-jerusalem-neighbourhood_en

Israel: Palestinians

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL17087] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which the United States-led Peace to Prosperity workshop, held in Bahrain on 25 to 26 June, has advanced efforts to find a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcome US efforts to support the development of the Palestinian economy. It is important that economic discussions complement a political process, which is ultimately required to unlock lasting and sustainable economic growth for Palestinians and overdue peace in the region. A peace deal and the lifting of access and movement restrictions would generate the ultimate economic dividend not only for the Occupied Palestinian Territories but also for Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the wider region. The UK's longstanding position on the Middle East Peace Process remains that we support a negotiated settlement

leading to a two-state solution based on 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-10/HL17087/>

Information about “Peace to Prosperity”, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/peacetoprosperity/unleashing-economic-potential/>

Jerusalem

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL17116] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, if any, with the government of Israel about (1) the demolition of Palestinian properties in East Jerusalem, (2) tunnelling in East Jerusalem, and (3) the activities of the Ateret Cohanim and Elad organisations.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Our Embassy in Tel Aviv discussed our concerns about the increase in demolitions in East Jerusalem with the Israeli Authorities on 25 June. The nature of these demolitions which took place within an area of the West Bank controlled by the Palestinian Authority is particularly concerning and we continue to monitor the situation closely. We regularly make clear our serious concerns about the situation in East Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and in co-operation with EU partners. We are strongly opposed to any attempts to change the facts on the ground in the East Jerusalem. The UK continues to regard Israeli settlements as illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace, and we regularly raise our concerns about settlement activity with the Israeli authorities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-07-11/HL17116/>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) (2629) US Middle East Peace Envoy – That this House condemns US peace envoy Jason Greenblatt's comments made in an interview with PBS on 17 July 2019, in which Greenblatt rejected the term occupied to describe the West Bank and described as pejorative the use of the word settlements; notes that the Oslo Accords recognised that land as occupied and the settlements as part of the West Bank and not Israel; and urges the Government to press the US to return to the Oslo Accords and restart the negotiating process according to Article V of the Accords.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/53173/us-middle-east-peace-envoy>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Wadi al Hummus: France, Germany, Spain and UK joint statement

A Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesperson said:

“The Governments of France, Germany, Spain and the UK strongly condemn the demolition by Israel of Palestinian buildings in the district of Wadi al Hummus, in the South East of Jerusalem.”

“We remain seriously concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by Israeli authorities. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolition in occupied territories is contrary to International Humanitarian Law and to UNSC resolutions. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians and is harmful to the peace process.”

“In this specific case, the demolitions were particularly egregious as a number of the

buildings were located in Areas A and B, under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority according to the Oslo Agreements, and thus constitute a violation of these agreements. They set a dangerous precedent that directly jeopardises the two state solution.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/wadi-al-hummus-france-germany-spain-and-uk-joint-statement>

European Union

Statement by the Spokesperson on the demolition of Palestinian buildings in East Jerusalem

Israeli authorities have proceeded with the demolition of 10 Palestinian buildings, containing some 70 apartments, in Wadi al Hummus, part of Sur Baher neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem. The majority of the buildings are located in Area A and B of the West Bank where, according to the Oslo Accords, all civil issues are under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority.

Israel's settlement policy, including actions taken in that context, such as forced transfers, evictions, demolitions and confiscations of homes, is illegal under international law. In line with the EU's long-standing position, we expect the Israeli authorities to immediately halt the ongoing demolitions.

The continuation of this policy undermines the viability of the two-state solution and the prospect for a lasting peace and seriously jeopardizes the possibility of Jerusalem serving as the future capital of both States.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-Homepage/65699/statement-spokesperson-demolition-palestinian-buildings-east-jerusalem_en

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Statement by Mr. Jamie McGoldrick (Humanitarian Coordinator), Ms. Gwyn Lewis (Director of West Bank Operations for UNRWA), and Mr. James Heenan (Head of the UN Human Rights Office in the occupied Palestinian territory)

We are following with sadness today the Israeli authorities' destruction of homes in the Palestinian community of Sur Bahir. ... The large-scale operation began in the early hours of this morning while it was still dark, forcing families out of their homes, and causing great distress among residents. Among those forcibly displaced or otherwise impacted are Palestine refugees, some of whom today are facing the reality of a second displacement in living memory.

Humanitarian partners are poised to provide emergency response to those displaced or otherwise affected by the destruction of their private property. But no amount of humanitarian assistance can replace a home or cover the massive financial losses sustained today by the owners. ... What happened today in Sur Bahir is of even greater significance, as many other homes and structures now risk the same fate.

Israel's policy of destroying Palestinian property is not compatible with its obligations under international humanitarian law. Among other things, the destruction of private property in occupied territory is only permissible where rendered absolutely necessary for military operations, which is not applicable. Furthermore, it results in forced evictions, and contributes to the risk of forcible transfer facing many Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ruled against the legality of the construction of the Barrier and found that the parts of the Barrier that run inside the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as we see in Sur Bahir, cannot be justified by military exigencies and thus violates Israel's obligations under international law. ...

To read the full statement see

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/un-officials-statement-demolitions-sur-bahir>

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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>

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Consultations ** new or updated today

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>

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