



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Israel

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

“Meaningful action” needed to stop Israeli settlement building, say UN experts
UN human rights experts said the international community has a duty to stand by their collective promise to protect the rights of the Palestinian people, and to take decisive action to prevent Israel’s planned construction of a record number of housing units in its West Bank settlements.

The experts refer in their comments to the Civil Administration’s High Planning Subcommittee meeting held this week, announcing the approval of around 2,400 housing units and public infrastructure in 21 settlements and outposts. These approvals are intended to formalize existing structures as well as provide initial permits.

“These settlement housing units are clearly meant to solidify the Israeli claim of sovereignty over the West Bank,” said Leilani Farha, the Special Rapporteur for the right to housing, and Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur for human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.

“Building civilian settlements in occupied territory is illegal, as is the annexation of territory. The international community has spoken out against the Israeli settlements, but it has not imposed effective consequences for the country’s defiance of international law.” ...

“Israel’s actions indicate it plans to remain permanently and advance a claim of sovereignty,” said the human rights experts. “The Israeli Prime Minister made this clear when he said recently that: ‘No settlement and no settlers will ever be uprooted.’ Should we not take him at his word that Israel has no intention of complying with international law?”

“Criticism without consequences is hollow. The international community has a wide menu of commonly-used countermeasures to push recalcitrant states into compliance with their international duties. If the international community is serious about its support for Palestinian self-determination and its opposition to Israeli settlements then, surely, the time has come for meaningful action.”

Occupying powers are forbidden under the Fourth Geneva Convention from building civilian settlements in occupied territory. The Rome Statute has defined the transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all or parts of the population of the occupied territory within or outside this territory, as a war crime. The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 2334 (23 December 2016), stated that the Israeli

settlements constitute “a flagrant violation under international law”. ...

The experts also noted the comments of Israeli cabinet ministers, who have stated that the Palestinian housing permits were issued in order to deflect international criticism of Israel’s policies of house demolition and record approval of new settlement housing units and to thwart the possibility of a Palestinian state.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24881&LanglD=E>

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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>

Human rights: Freedom of religion and belief, and human rights defenders inquiry

(closing date 31 August 2019)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/foreign-affairs-committee/inquiries1/parliament-2017/freedom-of-religion-and-belief-inquiry-17-19/>

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