

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Downing Street

Queen's Speech date

... The new Parliament will be summoned to meet on Tuesday 17 December, when the business will be the election of the Speaker and the swearing-in of members.

Should this Prime Minister return, the State Opening of Parliament and the Queen's Speech will follow on Thursday 19 December. ...

If there is a change of Government following the Election it is anticipated that the Queen's Speech would be in January ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/queens-speech-date>

Ministry of Justice

Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2018 (England and Wales)

Report

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848966/statistics-on-race-and-the-cjs-2018.pdf

Infographic

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848762/race-cjs-2018-infographic.pdf

A Technical Guide to Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System, 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848965/a-technical-guide-to-statistics-on-race-and-the-cjs-2018.pdf

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Antisemitism

S5W-26373 John Finnie (Green): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer

to questions S5W-25533 and S5W-25837 by Aileen Campbell on 8 October and 12 November 2019 respectively, in light of the cabinet secretary's confirmation that "a number of organisations" made informal requests for it to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism, whether it will provide the information that was requested regarding which bodies made these informal requests.

Aileen Campbell: A number of organisations highlighted the value of the IHRA definition in helping to tackle anti-Semitism, including the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities and Community Security Trust.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-26373>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-25533>

and

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-25837>

Office of National Statistics

Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality: individual country data

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=%2fpeoplepopulationandcommunity%2fpopulationandmigration%2finternationalmigration%2fdatasets%2fpopulationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationalityunderlyingdatasheets%2fjuly2018tojune2019/underlyingdatasheetsjul18tojun19.xls>

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland: Update to 30 September 2019

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/2019-20/q2/hate-motivation-bulletin-sep-19.pdf>

General Election: Manifestos

SNP Manifesto

https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/www.snp.org/uploads/2019/11/11_27-SNP-Manifesto-2019-for-download.pdf

Labour Party Race and Faith Manifesto

<https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Race-and-Faith-Manifesto-2019.pdf>

Scottish Conservative Party Manifesto

http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/GE-Manifesto_Scotland.pdf

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United Nations

Thinking Middle East Conflict Can Be Managed or Contained ‘A Dangerous Illusion’, Warns Secretary-General in Observing Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People

... Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the most intractable challenges facing the international community. Regrettably, over the past year, there have been no positive developments, and the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate.

The intensification of illegal settlements, demolitions of Palestinian homes and the pervasive suffering in Gaza must stop. The establishment of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law, as stated in Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). These actions threaten to undermine the viability of establishing a Palestinian State based on relevant United Nations resolutions. At the same time, the indiscriminate launching of rockets and mortars towards Israeli civilian populations must cease.

I call on Israelis and Palestinians, and all their supporters, to take steps that will restore faith in the two-State solution. There is no viable alternative. It is a dangerous illusion to think that the conflict can be managed or contained in perpetuity. Only constructive negotiations between the parties, in good faith, with support from the international community and adhering to long-standing United Nations resolutions and long-agreed parameters, will bring about a just and durable solution, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States. What is needed, first and foremost, are leadership and political will. The efforts of civil society and those on all sides who seek to bridge the gap between Israelis and Palestinians also need to be supported.

On this International Day of Solidarity, let us reaffirm our commitment to upholding the rights of the Palestinian people. The United Nations will not waver in its commitment to the Palestinian people as we strive to achieve their inalienable rights and build a future of peace, justice, security and dignity for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19883.doc.htm>

Observing International Day, Speakers in Palestinian Rights Committee Denounce Israel’s Illegal Occupation as ‘Moral Shame’, Call for End to Settler Violence

Cheikh Niang (Senegal), Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, underscored the need to uphold resolution 181, adopted 72 years ago, when the General Assembly decided to split Palestine under the mandate of two sovereign, neighbouring States. ... one State saw that day, while the other never achieved its independence and sovereignty. It is discouraging that “we must reunite each year to recall to the entire world that the United Nations continues to struggle to keep its promise,” he said, stressing that for 52 years, Palestinians have lived under an illegal occupation that flouts their inalienable rights to self-determination, to Statehood and independence, and millions continue to suffer as refugees, while their international right to return is constantly denied. ...

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria), President of the General Assembly, said the ... international community has a collective responsibility to resolve the issue, as for seven decades, the question of Palestine has remained unresolved and civilians have suffered. “Arab or Jewish, we are one, and our destinies are intricately linked”, he said, urging a focus on de-escalation and ensuring a just peace with two States living side by side based on 1967 lines. ...

Karen Pierce (United Kingdom), speaking in her capacity as President of the Security Council for November, said the ... Council remains committed to finding a

lasting and just peace in the Middle East, a goal that should be achieved through direct negotiations between the parties. Calling for an end to actions that undermine trust, she condemned indiscriminate attacks against civilians and expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza. ...

Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, said resolving the Palestinian conflict represents one of the international community's greatest challenges. She urged that intensified illegal settlement building stop, as it has no legal validity and violates international law. Indiscriminate rocket fire also must cease and she called on Israelis and Palestinians to take steps towards the two-State solution. ... there must be a stronger response to Palestinians' humanitarian needs and efforts towards peace must continue. ...

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, speaking on behalf of Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine and Palestinian National Authority, said that over 70 years, Palestinians have endured many tragedies, suffering displacement and imprisonment while defending their history. Israel has only pursued delaying tactics and "bad faith actions" since the conclusion of the Oslo Accords, he stressed, noting that Israel's Prime Minister rejected the two-State solution and actively pursued annexation and settlement activities. Israel also has promulgated discriminatory, racist laws, and isolated Gaza from the rest of the country, and indeed the world.

Meanwhile, United States violations of international law prove it is unqualified to be an honest broker, he said, recalling that two weeks ago, the United States Secretary of State declared that Israel's settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, do not contravene international law. "This statement is null and void", illegitimate, without legal effect, and stands in complete contravention to international law and United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions ... Such unlawful statements only embolden Israel to perpetuate its occupation and accelerate its settlement building. Treating Israel as a State above the law has only encouraged it to act as an "outlaw", he stressed, pressing the international community to assume its responsibilities to end Israel's aggression. ...

Kshenuka Senewiratne (Sri Lanka), Chair of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, said ... civil society representatives, victims and witnesses briefed the Special Committee on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the occupied Syrian Golan. Their testimonies brought attention to the daily violence and hardship endured by Palestinians, where every aspect of life is affected by the unlawful occupation. ...

Recalling that the Special Committee recently presented its fifty-first report, he said it provides updates on Israel's expanded settlement building, destruction and confiscation of Palestinian property, increased settler violence, use of administrative detention of Palestinians, exploitation of natural resources, humanitarian crisis in Gaza and lack of accountability for such abuses. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/gapal1428.doc.htm>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

Scottish Parliament

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

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Consultations ** new or updated today

Draft content of the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Specified Type A Procedures) (Scotland) Regulations (closing date 11 December 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/population-health/human-tissue-regulations-2019/>

Equality Act 2010: Commencing the socio-economic duty (Welsh Government)

(closing date 17 January 2020)

<https://gov.wales/equality-act-2010-commencing-socio-economic-duty>

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill (closing date 31 January 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/113449.aspx>

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