



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Hate Crime

Stella Creasy (Labour Co-op) [6674] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what meetings have taken place between Ministers in his Department and the Law Commission on the review of hate crime legislation.

Chris Philp: There have been no meetings between current Ministers in the Ministry of Justice and the Law Commission on the review of hate crime legislation. The Law Commission were invited to independently review the law relating to hate crime and to make recommendations to the Government for its reform. That review began in March 2019.

The Law Commission are considering the current range of offences and aggravating factors in sentencing, and will make recommendations to the Government on the most appropriate models to ensure that the criminal law provides consistent and effective protection from conduct motivated by hatred towards protected groups or characteristics. The review will also take account of the existing range of protected characteristics, identifying any gaps in the scope of protection currently offered under the law and making recommendations to promote a consistent approach.

The Law Commission plan to issue a consultation on this matter in early 2020. Further information on the review can be found on the Law Commission webpage at: <https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-22/6674/>

Hate Crime: Social Media

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [4726] To ask the Attorney General, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the CPS has adequate resources to tackle hate crime on social media.

Michael Ellis: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is committed to robustly prosecuting online hate crime cases, including offline offences with online elements. The CPS works closely with partners across Government under the hate crime

action plan.

On 12 August 2019, the Prime Minister announced an investment of an additional £85 million for the CPS. The work carried out by the CPS is changing, and this new funding will provide the increased capacity to enable the CPS to respond effectively to challenging trends, such as an increase in online crime and the volume of digital evidence.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-17/4726/>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-launches-sentencing-review-to-look-at-most-dangerous-and-prolific-offenders>

Sports: Racial Discrimination

Catherine West (Labour) [6185] To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to tackle racism in sport.

Nigel Adams: The government is clear that racism has no place in sport or society at large. The sport and physical activity strategy 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation' has diversity and inclusion at its heart. Government remains supportive of a number of anti-racism initiatives that work with sports bodies from grassroots to the elite, including Show Racism the Red Card and Kick it Out.

Over the past year the government has led debates in the House of Commons on tackling racism in sport (on 22nd May 2019 and 12th July 2019), and hosted an Anti-Racism Summit in February 2019. This led to the three main English football organisations making clear commitments to tackle racism in football stadia from July 2019. The Sports Minister met with the FA last week and discussed their progress in delivering against these commitments, and will be calling in all the footballing authorities for a further update about their work on this important issue. Further to these commitments, ministers and officials continue to speak to the FA and relevant football bodies to explore what more can be done.

Grassroots sport clubs receive support in tackling racism from our national sport council, Sport England, who provide free support and learning in running a club through its "Club Matters" programme.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-21/6185/>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf

The wrong dates have been quoted in relation to the House of Commons debates referred to above. There was no relevant debate on 22 May 2019, and the Commons was not sitting on 12 July 2019.

Ministry of Justice

Updated: Guide to coroner services

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/859076/guide-to-coroner-services-bereaved-people-jan-2020.pdf

Welsh Assembly Oral Answer

Hate Crime

Mohammad Asghar (Conservative): Will the Deputy Minister provide an update on measures to tackle hate crime in Wales? OAQ54993

Jane Hutt (Deputy Minister and Chief Whip): We've significantly increased our investment in tackling hate crime in recent months to address the rise in hateful narratives. And I'll lead a debate in March providing an update on action to tackle hate crime with our partners in Wales. ...

<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/6077#C261420>

Scottish Government

Fund announced for security measures at places of worship

A new £500,000 scheme will give funding for places of worship to install a range of security measures to protect them against hate crime.

Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf and Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell announced the new scheme when they visited Garnethill Synagogue in Glasgow.

The fund will be launched later this year and will be open to all places of worship in Scotland. Religious groups will be consulted in the coming months to help develop the scheme.

Mr Yousaf said: "We recently committed to exploring what we could do to ensure safety and security for our faith communities at their places of worship, including developing a security funding scheme. I hope that this scheme will provide reassurance to all faith communities and their places of worship that hate crime and prejudice will not be tolerated."

Ms Campbell said: "We are committed to ensuring that our communities in Scotland feel free to practice their religion in a place where they feel safe. No one should fear being attacked because of their faith and particularly in their place of worship.

"We are determined that all places of worship should be places of peace and sanctuary and that our faith communities feel safe and secure when they visit them."

<https://www.gov.scot/news/fund-announced-for-security-measures-at-places-of-worship/>

TOP

Holocaust

House of Commons Speaker's Statement

Mr Speaker: Today is Holocaust Memorial Day and the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. Many powerful speeches were made in the debate on this subject last Thursday, highlighting the personal stories of those terrible events. We remember the millions of people murdered during the holocaust under Nazi persecution and in the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-01-27/debates/CD62479D-1794-4F2D-906D-927A230098C3/Speaker%E2%80%99SStatement>

The debate referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-01-23/debates/91823D04-BF3E-4AFE-B0DD-E4A907B577C5/HolocaustMemorialDay>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-01-23/debates/3E8ADAB4-B5D4-46B0-BB5D-508488D4498C/HolocaustMemorialDay>

House of Commons Written Answer

Museums and Galleries

Tim Loughton (Conservative) [6597] To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what his policy is on the restitution of antiquities from national museums to their country of origin.

Helen Whately: Our 15 national museums hold world-class collections in trust for the nation that are seen in their global context by over 40 million visitors each year. Decisions relating to museum collections are a matter for the trustees of each museum, who operate independently of government. UK law prevents some national museums from removing items from their collections. The two exceptions to this are human remains, under 1000 years old, and cultural property spoliated during the Nazi era.

We are committed to supporting our museums in dealing confidently with all aspects of restitution. Our national development agency for museums, Arts Council England, which is sponsored by my department, is currently working to refresh existing sector guidelines on restitution for UK museums.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-22/6597/>

Downing Street

PM speech at the UK Commemorative Ceremony for Holocaust Memorial Day

... the Holocaust is unique, because it was the industrialised murder of a race, of 6 million Jews, of whom 1.5 million were children, along with millions of other targets of Nazi persecution.

As Prime Minister, I promise that we will preserve this truth forever.

I will make sure we build the National Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre, so that future generations can never doubt what happened, because that is the only way we can be certain that it never happens again.

And I feel a deep sense of shame that here in Britain – in 2020 – we seem to be dealing with a resurgence of the virus of anti-semitism - and I know that I carry responsibility as Prime Minister to do everything possible to stamp it out.

As we resolutely proclaim “never again”, it is right that we should also ask what happened to our resolve in the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

And as I stand here, in the presence of many of Britain’s Holocaust survivors, I feel a special obligation towards the sanctity of their testimonies, because nothing can compare with hearing directly from a survivor.

I will do everything I can as Prime Minister to ensure these testimonies are shared as widely as possible, encouraging the use of technology so the tangible, palpable, irrefutable reality of this experience is preserved as something not just for this generation but for every generation.

In doing so, we will ensure that Britain never forgets the truth of the Holocaust.

In the name of all those who perished, may their memory be a blessing for ever.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-at-the-uk-commemorative-ceremony-for-holocaust-memorial-day>

Scottish Parliament Motions

S5M-20603 Aileen Campbell (SNP): Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 – 75th Anniversary

– That the Parliament recognises that 2020's Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January marked the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau; remembers everyone affected by the Holocaust, including the execution of 17 million people, six million of whom were Jewish; acknowledges the importance of learning the lessons from the Holocaust and subsequent genocides, including the value of the Holocaust Education Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz Project, which gives students from schools in Scotland the opportunity to visit Auschwitz; notes this year's theme, Stand together, which highlights the importance of building safe, resilient and inclusive communities in order to tackle hatred and prejudice; commends the incredible courage of those who stood up in support of justice, equality and humanity, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and recommit to stand together, united against hate, in order to build a society where hatred and prejudice are not tolerated.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-20603>

S5M-20609 Neil Findlay (Labour): Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 – That the Parliament joins together in commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day 2020, which this year marks the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau; notes that the theme is Stand Together, which encourages everyone to come together in remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust and the genocides that have subsequently taken place, including in Bosnia, Cambodia, Rwanda and Darfur; thanks West Lothian Council and the school pupils, teachers and members of the community who came together in a remembrance event in Livingston; notes the importance of such events in reminding the world of past atrocities so that people can try to ensure they can never again be repeated, and recognises that everyone should stand together on Holocaust Memorial Day, and throughout the year, to promote tolerance and respect in society in order to ensure that all can contribute to creating a better and prosperous future.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-20609>

Scottish Parliament Time for Reflection

Stephen Stone (Headteacher, St Roch's Secondary School, Glasgow): Holocaust memorial day takes place on 27 January every year to remember the millions lost in the Holocaust and in subsequent genocides. This year is especially poignant as it marks 25 years since the genocide in Bosnia and 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz. Vision schools Scotland was launched in 2017 to accredit and support schools that demonstrate commitment and good practice in Holocaust education. Set up by the school of education and social sciences at the University of the West of Scotland, under Dr Paula Cowan, in partnership with the Holocaust Educational Trust, it provides free, high-quality training for teachers and advice on teaching the Holocaust. There are 15 vision schools across Scotland, with several more to receive the award this year. ...

Accreditation by vision schools Scotland has sharpened our focus and affirmed our good practice. ...

To read the full transcript see

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12485&i=112851#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Government

Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 message

Marking Holocaust Memorial Day and the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: "Holocaust Memorial Day is an important reminder of the millions of people who were murdered, or whose lives were changed forever, during the Holocaust and other genocides.

"By marking this date, we must reflect upon and learn the important lessons from these horrendous acts of violence and terror. We pay tribute to the survivors, who were forced to flee their homes and livelihoods in the face of unthinkable persecution. We also honour the legacy of those who demonstrated immense bravery and courage fighting for liberty, freedom and justice, many of whom, sadly, paid with their lives.

"This year is particularly poignant as we observe the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and 25 years since the genocide in Srebrenica. The theme for this Holocaust Memorial Day – 'Stand Together' – highlights the importance of our collective societal responsibility to stand against hatred and prejudice and to promote strong, inclusive and respectful communities. We all need to work together to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, race, faith or sexuality is treated with equal respect and dignity. Today's announcement of funding for security measures to protect our places of worship against hate crime will help promote the very clear message that hatred and prejudice will not be tolerated in Scotland."

<https://firstminister.gov.scot/holocaust-memorial-day-2020-message/>

Welsh Assembly Oral Questions

Antisemitism

Suzy Davies (Conservative): What is the Welsh Government doing to tackle anti-semitism? OAQ55000

Jane Hutt (Deputy Minister and Chief Whip): The Welsh Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism in full and without qualification. We are determined to root out intolerance in our communities, and I will provide a full statement this afternoon on work that we are doing to combat antisemitism and to commemorate the Holocaust.

Suzy Davies: ... I would like to ask you about education and, in the light of the new curriculum, whether you would consider the work of the March of the Living movement. This is an annual educational programme that brings students from around the world to Poland, where they explore the remnants of the Holocaust and march silently from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

I have to say that visiting the camps really does change people. Seeing is believing, and certainly feeling. If education is at the heart of stamping out hatred, would you please work with the education Minister to ensure absolutely that the Holocaust does not fall out of the curriculum, and that as many young people as possible have the opportunity to see these camps for themselves?

Jane Hutt: ... I realise that this follows your visit, and that you were part of a delegation, I understand, to Auschwitz. I'm sure that we will hear more about that later on this afternoon, when I make my statement. I know that the education Minister will be willing to look at the March of the Living movement, in particular, as you've raised it today, but you will know that we do also provide an annual grant of £119,000 to the Holocaust Educational Trust to deliver the Lessons from Auschwitz Project. And also, and we'll speak more of this this afternoon, I'm sure, we've provided £40,500 of funding, EU transition funding, in fact, to the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust to undertake much work involving schools in Wales as part of

this year's commemorations.

Actually, yesterday, young people took part in the national service in City Hall, which was very powerful, I know, and also last night at an event at the Friends Meeting House, where two young people read out a Holocaust memorial prayer in Welsh and in English. And I think the fact that we're supporting the Holocaust Educational Trust does mean that, in fact, last year, a visit took place. Now that I've got the opportunity to say: 186 participants took part in that visit to Auschwitz, including 154 pupils from 66 schools, sixth forms and colleges, 19 teachers, 13 others, including facilitators and press representatives. And that programme will run again in Wales from January—crucial to enable young people to engage. But, clearly, we will also look at the movements, the March of the Living movement as well.

Joyce Watson (Labour): Yesterday marked the seventy-fifth anniversary since the liberation of Auschwitz death camp. It's estimated that over a million people who were predominantly Jewish died a horrific death there. And that included men, women and children of all ages. And it is certainly, we will all agree, one of the darkest periods in our human history. Minister, do you agree with me that we must always remember the atrocities that happened in Auschwitz, so that they do serve as a stark reminder of what did and what can happen when people incite hatred towards others?

Jane Hutt: I do thank Joyce Watson for that question. Together, we must ensure the Holocaust remains in our collective memory as a warning of how hateful and divisive narratives can cause that unthinkable damage. And that's why we have funded the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Holocaust Educational Trust to undertake activities in Wales. But I think that many Members here from across the Chamber will have heard survivors—in fact, we heard a survivor earlier on this year at an event organised with Darren Millar and Jenny Rathbone and others. But yesterday some of us also heard the survivor Dr Martin Stern. We know that the survivors' stories—it is hard to believe that they've survived, but they're so committed, often in retirement, and we have to listen to those survivors about what they've gone through. But, I think, the Holocaust Memorial Day, is, as they say, learning lessons from the past to create a safer, better future, and we will be speaking more on this later this afternoon.

<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/6077#C261423>

Curriculum for Wales Framework

200 Suzy Davies (Conservative): ... This week, of course, we're reminding ourselves of the horrors of the Holocaust. This is not just history or a point of illustration about genocide or equalities—this is something I think really has to be embedded into our collective DNA. Not just because of the Poles and the Jews and the Roma and the disabled and the LGBT victims, but precisely because it is unimaginable. There is nothing to prevent teaching about the Holocaust, and I accept everything we heard from the Deputy Minister earlier, but would you consider raising the prominence of the Holocaust within the guidance when it goes out to further consultation? ...

210 Kirsty Williams (Minister for Education): ... This is the final version of this document—there's no further consultation on what is being published today. This is it, so we won't be going back out on this. ...

<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/6077#C261511>

Welsh Government

First Minister asks Wales to 'stand together' as world remembers the Holocaust

... The First Minister said: Today is a painful day ...

The Holocaust is a shameful event in history, which we must remember forever. It

happened, like all genocides before and since, because people's differences were used to whip up suspicion and drive divisions through society.

We must stand together. We must celebrate our differences. And we must believe there is more that unites us than drives us apart. It's the only way to make sure these sorry events stay exactly where they belong – in the history books. ...

Olivia Marks-Woldman, chief executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said: We are pleased to be working once again with the Welsh Government to help people across Wales learn about the Holocaust and more recent genocides. ...

The exhibition 75 Memorial Flames has been created by community groups to remember those who lost their lives during the Holocaust. 9 of the memorial flames were developed by groups in Wales ... [and] will go on tour across the UK ...

To read the full press release see

<https://gov.wales/first-minister-asks-wales-to-stand-together-as-world-remembers-the-holocaust>

Northern Ireland Executive

HMD 2020: Regional commemoration hears calls for people to 'Stand Together'

More than 500 people came together at Belfast City Hall on Monday evening to participate in the regional Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) commemoration. ...

Junior Minister Lyons said: "As each year passes the poignancy and importance of the act of commemoration and remembrance becomes more significant. I believe that the testimonies of survivors like Tomi play an important role in helping us to understand what happened and to learn lessons for society today. Their testimony must never be forgotten. We must learn from this terrible history so that we do not repeat the sins of the past."

Junior Minister Kearney added: "The theme for HMD 2020 is 'Stand Together'. That is a very important message in today's world. There must be no tolerance in our society and international community, for persecution, discrimination and inequality. The theme 'Stand Together', 'Seasainís Le Chéile', must be a moral and political call to action. It demands that we challenge and eradicate the mindsets and practices which perpetuate hatred, prejudice and division. But it must also serve as inspiration to 'Stand Together' in pursuit of a new vision for our world, which values all citizens with dignity and respect, regardless of creed, colour, culture, ethnic identity, sexual orientation or political persuasion." ...

Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, commented: "For the first time in many years, HMD ceremonies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are taking place on the same day, which is particularly symbolic given this year's theme: Stand Together. The significant milestone that we collectively mark is made especially poignant by the dwindling number of survivors of the Holocaust who are able to share their testimonies. By joining us here today, you are standing together with people still facing prejudice and hostility ...

In her closing reflection, the Lord Lieutenant for the County Borough of Belfast, Fionnuala Jay-O'Boyle CBE said: "The horror that is Holocaust is as sadly relevant today as ever was. People only die when we forget them. So our remembrance needs to be active, vocal and determined. National Holocaust Memorial Day allows for precisely this." ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/hmd-2020-regional-commemoration-hears-calls-people-stand-together>

Council of Europe

Ceremony to Mark the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust: Speech by Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić

Yesterday marked 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau: An event that brought to the world's attention the atrocities, suffering and mass murder committed in camps and communities throughout Nazi-occupied Europe.

This awareness underpinned the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the establishment of the Council of Europe itself. ...

... as the years pass by, and the survivors grow fewer in number, it becomes ever more important to remember the terrible atrocities carried out on European soil.

By far the biggest target was Europe's Jewish communities.

Around six million Jews were brutally murdered during the years of the Second World War. But Roma, LGBTI people and others were imprisoned, tortured and killed too.

To each of these, we pay our deepest respects today, mindful of the generations that have been lost – and of the contributions that those people would have made to European life. We also remember because it is our duty to ensure that such things can happen never again:

That we do everything possible to prevent and to counter the hatred and prejudice that breeds violence and discrimination. ...

To read the full transcript see

https://www.coe.int/en/web/secretary-general/speeches-2020/-/asset_publisher/g3BpCOuWFJE3/content/ceremony-to-mark-the-international-day-of-commemoration-in-memory-of-the-victims-of-the-holocaust

Ceremony to Mark the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust: Speech by President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Rik Daems

75 years ago, the Nazi Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp was liberated by the Soviet army. The world discovered the truth about the most infamous crime humankind has ever witnessed - a premeditated, carefully calculated and organised mass murder of human beings on the ground of their religious beliefs, ethnic origin, political views or sexual orientation.

Today, as every year, we pay tribute to the memory of 6 million Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust.

We pay tribute to the memory of millions of other people who lost their lives – members of minority groups such as Roma and Travellers, homosexuals, persons with disabilities, prisoners of war and political prisoners.

We pay our respects to those few who survived the Holocaust. By courageously telling their stories they keep the memory of the Holocaust alive.

We also recall those who bravely resisted the Holocaust and fought the Nazi regime.

This Ceremony started with the Partisans' song which was inspired by the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

For me, it has a particular meaning because my grandfather was part of the Belgian Resistance and died in a death camp.

The Holocaust and the atrocities of the Second World War have affected all of us - through family stories, testimonies of survivors and history books.

The Holocaust is part of our collective memory. It is our duty to make sure that never again may such atrocities happen.

This is especially important for young people who may be tempted to see the Holocaust as just a chapter in history books. But, we know that the Holocaust is more than just history. It is a human and moral tragedy that shaped our collective conscience. It happened

because of intolerance, hate, silence and inaction.

Today, when anti-Semitism, hate speech, anti-Muslim feelings and all sorts of discrimination and fear of the other are on the rise again, we must recall our moral compass - human dignity and fundamental rights, the values that reconciled and reunited the people of Europe 75 years ago.

If we do this, we are carrying out our duty towards the memory of the victims, which is also important for generations to come.

<http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/Page-EN.asp?LID=SpeechDaems20200128>

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Building tolerant and compassionate societies honours the dead and gives hope for the future, OSCE says on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

... "This is a day to remember the unimaginable suffering of Europe's Jews and all victims of Nazism," said Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). "But solemn words are not enough to honour their memory – it is action we need. By building more tolerant and inclusive societies, we help to ensure the horrors of the past never return, and at the same time give the younger generation hope for a future without hate."

To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, ODIHR is today publishing its sixth overview of Holocaust remembrance and education in the OSCE region. This provides an update on activities across the OSCE region to commemorate and teach about the Holocaust and the Roma and Sinti genocide, as well as the fate of other victims of Nazi persecution.

Stepping up teaching on the Holocaust and forging coalitions with civil society and community organizations is becoming ever more important following the recent spate of anti-Semitic attacks in a number of countries across the OSCE region. At the same time, political and religious leaders need to confront the causes of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, acknowledging that those who commit hate crimes feel emboldened by policies and a political discourse that sow division.

Education provides an effective antidote to prejudice and ignorance by ensuring that young people understand how such atrocities were committed in a Europe that believed itself to be civilized. Teaching about the Holocaust equips students with the knowledge to challenge any attempts to deny or trivialize the crimes of National Socialism.

"The Holocaust is a reminder of how easy it was for words to become deeds to become genocide, of how anti-Semitism left unchecked nearly eradicated Jewish life in Europe," said Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism. "Yet in this darkest of times there were also acts of courage and heroism by victims and those who helped them that remain a continuing source of hope." ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/444754>

Holocaust Memorial Days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region: 2020

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/hmd2020?download=true>

Secretary-General Spotlights Re-emerging Crisis of Antisemitism, Warning 'We Can Never Lower Our Guard', at Holocaust Memorial Ceremony

... Our solidarity in the face of hatred is needed today more than ever, as we see a deeply worrying resurgence in antisemitic attacks around the world, and almost unbelievable, also around us here in New York. Just 30 miles from here, less than a month ago, a knife attack on a Hanukkah party left five people injured at a rabbi's house in the small community of Monsey [New York]. That came just a few weeks after the killing of four people at a kosher supermarket in New Jersey. New York saw a 21 per cent rise in antisemitic hate crimes in 2019, part of a trend in cities across the United States.

But, the situation for Jews in Europe is, if anything, worse. France saw a 74 per cent increase in antisemitic attacks in 2018. In the United Kingdom, they rose by 16 per cent to a record high. ...

We need to name this phenomenon for what it is: There is a global crisis of antisemitic hatred, a constant stream of attacks targeting Jews, their institutions and property. Almost every day brings new reports of hate crimes. Many of the perpetrators are inspired by previous attacks, glorifying the assailants and creating a self-reinforcing vortex of violence. Neo-Nazis and white supremacists are resurgent, organizing themselves and spreading their poisonous ideology and iconography online. The Internet, from social media to online gaming platforms and the dark web, is their playground and their recruiting office. They manipulate video content and poison young minds.

This upsurge of anti-Semitism cannot be seen in isolation from an extremely troubling increase in xenophobia, homophobia, discrimination and hatred in many parts of the world, targeting people on the basis of their identity, including race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability and immigration status. Attacks against religious minorities are a particular concern. Around the world, we have seen Jews murdered in synagogues, their gravestones defaced with swastikas; Christians killed at prayer, their churches torched; and Muslims gunned down in mosques, their religious sites vandalized.

As the former Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, Jonathan Sacks, has said: "The hate that begins with Jews never ends there." Seventy-five years ago today, when the soldiers of the Soviet army entered Auschwitz, they were stunned into silence by what they saw. The Nazis' efforts to hide their crimes were undermined by the clear evidence of millions of pieces of clothing and tons of hair. To quote Primo Levi, the liberators felt "guilt that such a crime should exist".

Like the soldiers, we are revolted by the horrific details of Auschwitz. But it is our duty to look and to continue looking, to learn and to relearn the lessons of the Holocaust, so that it is never repeated. The most important lesson is that the Holocaust was not an aberration committed at a particular moment in history by a few unspeakably sick people. It was the culmination of millennia of hatred, from the Roman Empire to the pogroms of the Middle Ages. ...

European Jews were excluded from almost all areas of economic activity, scapegoated if they succeeded and defined as inferior. One scheme put forward decades before Hitler's rise to power involved shipping all Eastern Europe's Jews to the African island of Madagascar. When I visited Yad Vashem two years ago, I was appalled once again by the ability of anti-Semitism to reinvent itself and re-emerge over millennia. It takes new forms, it may be spread by new techniques, but it is the same old hatred. We can never lower our guard.

And far from being the project of a few insane individuals, the Nazi attempt to exterminate Jews and other vulnerable people involved architects, scientists, doctors, lawyers, engineers, drivers, bureaucrats and soldiers. Millions of ordinary people were desensitized to crimes against humanity taking place around them, often described by euphemisms like "special measures". As the great writer Hannah Arendt said, most evil is

done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil.

The Holocaust was a complex operation arising from long-held prejudices and required the corruption of society from top to bottom, the corruption of language, of education and political discourse. As we work to live up to the promise of “Never again”, we need to examine our own prejudices, guard against the misuse of our own technology and be alert to any signs that hatred is being normalized.

Prejudice and hatred thrive on insecurity, frustrated expectations, ignorance and resentment. Populist leaders exploit these feelings to whip up fear in pursuit of power. When any group of people is defined as a problem, it becomes easier to commit human rights abuses and to normalize discrimination against them. Combating prejudice requires leadership at all levels that fosters social cohesion and addresses the root causes of hatred. It requires investment in all parts of society, so that all can contribute in a spirit of mutual respect.

Promoting social cohesion and human rights, and addressing discrimination and hatred are among the overriding aims of the United Nations, through our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Decade of Action I launched last week is aimed at stepping up support for countries around the world to build inclusive, diverse, respectful societies that provide lives of dignity and opportunity for all. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm19951.doc.htm>

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Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL359] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the claims by Addameer, published on 23 December 2019, that they have collected evidence of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees at Israeli interrogation centres.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made an assessment of these specific claims, the British Government has concerns about mistreatment of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons, and about Israel's respect of its obligations as an occupying power, under applicable international law. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv have raised the treatment of Palestinians in Israeli prisons with the Israeli authorities, most recently on 16 December 2019. We emphasise the importance of treating prisoners and detainees humanely and in accordance with international law.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL359/>

The claims referred to above can be read at

<http://www.addameer.org/news/addameer-collects-hard-evidence-torture-and-ill-treatment-committed-against-palestinian>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL432] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the Palestinian economy of Palestinian tax revenues being withheld by Israel.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains gravely concerned about the

economic and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the impacts of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority (PA) being withheld. We have repeatedly raised with the Government of Israel our concerns about its decision to withhold tax revenues to the PA, most recently on 17 December 2019. It is important Israel carries out the regular monthly transfer of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA in line with its international obligations. We expect economic and fiscal agreements between Israel and the PA to continue to be fully implemented, including Israel's obligations under the Oslo Accords and Paris Protocol.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL432/>

Israeli Settlements

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL394] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about its decision to allow Israeli citizens to register land deeds in Area C of the West Bank; and what assessment they have made of that decision.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are very concerned about the granting of further rights and privileges to Israelis living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We recognise that Palestinians face severe difficulty in securing building permissions for homes and infrastructure in East Jerusalem and Area C. Practically, this leaves Palestinians with little option but to build without permission, placing their homes at risk of demolition on the grounds they do not have a permit. We continue to urge the Government of Israel to develop improved mechanisms for zoning, planning and permitting in Area C for the benefit of the Palestinian population, including by facilitating local Palestinian participation in such processes. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv did so most recently on 10 December 2019.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL394/>

Israel: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL395] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the vote in the Israeli Security Cabinet on 29 December 2019 to withhold \$43 million of tax funds from the Palestinian Authority, based on claims that the money has been used to promote violence.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have repeatedly raised with the Government of Israel our concerns about Israel's decision to withhold tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority (PA), most recently on 17 December 2019. It is important Israel carries out the regular monthly transfer of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA in line with its international obligations. We expect economic and fiscal agreements between Israel and the PA to continue to be fully implemented.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL395/>

Israel: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL396] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports of assaults on Palestinian growers, thefts of olives and vandalism of olive trees and farm equipment in 2019.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are troubled by reports of assaults on Palestinian farmers, the vandalism of olive trees, and the stealing of produce. The UK condemns any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the increase in settler violence with the Israeli

authorities on 17 December 2019. Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from acts of violence. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL396/>

Israel: West Bank

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL397] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in response to the publication of data by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the demolition of structures and displacement in Area C of the West Bank in 2019, including the finding that 507 persons have been displaced and 394 structures have been demolished.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by the Israeli authorities. 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. We have repeatedly made clear to the Israeli authorities our serious concern at the increase in demolitions of Palestinian properties in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem, most recently on 17 December 2019. The UK and international partners will continue to call bilaterally, and in international fora, for Israel to abandon demolition plans entirely, and instead provide a transparent route to construction for Palestinians in Area C. The British Government supports Bedouin communities and Palestinians facing demolition or eviction in Area C of the West Bank through our legal aid programme, which helps residents challenge decisions in the Israeli legal system. The UK has also allocated £1.1 million to support essential infrastructure for vulnerable Palestinians in Area C.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL397/>

The data referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition>

Jerusalem: Religious Freedom

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL398] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported attacks by Israeli police on Muslim worshippers in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound on 7 January.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains concerned by incidents on Haram Al-Sharif / Temple Mount, including altercations inside the al-Aqsa Mosque. We have stressed the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. In our meetings with the Israeli authorities we regularly raise the need to respect the status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised this issue with the Israeli authorities on 16 October 2019.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL398/>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/educationassemblies.html>

**** Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/marriageandcivilpartnershipminimumage.html>

Bill as introduced

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/58-01/061/5801061.pdf>

First Reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-27/debates/57D8D237-5B90-4E8C-9ED7-D42CF4C2D770/MarriageAndCivilPartnership\(MinimumAge\)Bill\(HL\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-27/debates/57D8D237-5B90-4E8C-9ED7-D42CF4C2D770/MarriageAndCivilPartnership(MinimumAge)Bill(HL))

Scottish Parliament

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

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

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Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 4 days**

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

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

Harassment and sexual misconduct in higher education (closing date 27 March 2020)

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf>

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