



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Prime Minister's Questions

Q7. **Thangam Debbonaire (Labour):** Resignation of an experienced civil servant, sacking of a Government aide—with this Government it seems that allegations of bullying or just being incompetent gets you promoted, whereas standing up to it, you lose your job. What does this say about this Prime Minister? [901082]

**The Prime Minister:** I loathe bullying, but I am not taking any lessons from a party that has presided over systematic bullying and discrimination against those who stick up for the Jewish community and for Israel in this country, and we still have yet to hear a proper apology from the Labour party or from the Labour leadership for what they have done.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-03-04/debates/034D0B7F-9941-489F-ADDD-69F0E6FC7CA9/Engagements#contribution-AE5522B0-52B9-4A84-8042-BA591EEF3E1F>

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## Holocaust

### UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Lisa Cameron (SNP) (252) Aktion T4** – That this House remembers the tragic events known as Aktion T4 in Nazi Germany; notes that up to 300,000 people died as a result of that involuntary euthanasia programme in Nazi Germany; recognises the horror of the crime committed, namely that both children and adults were murdered purely because of their mental or physical disabilities; further recognises the value of all people, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, gender and disability; condemns any abuse of individuals due to a particular characteristic that they have; and urges the Government to do more to protect people with disabilities and ensure that they are treated equally in all aspects of life

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/56704/aktion-t4>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Palestinians: Schools**

**Robert Largan (Conservative)** [901099] What progress has been made on the international review into the books included in the Palestinian Authority's school curriculum.

**Jack Lopresti (Conservative)** [901103] What progress has been made on the international review into the books included in the Palestinian Authority's school curriculum.

**James Cleverly:** Following the UK's calls for international action, an EU sponsored independent review of Palestinian textbooks is currently underway. We understand that an interim report will be completed in Spring 2020 with the full report due later this year. The Development Secretary made it clear that incitement in education is unacceptable when she spoke with the PA Education Minister last week and she held him to account on progress to remove hateful content.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-03-04/901099/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-03-04/901103/>

#### **Egypt: Gaza**

**Matthew Offord (Conservative)** [19840] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on people living in Gaza of the construction of a wall by the Egyptian Government along their respective borders.

**James Cleverly:** We remain deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Gaza and support the Palestinian Authority returning to administer Gaza. Egypt has a right to secure borders, and we continue urging Egypt to show maximum flexibility in opening the Rafah crossing. Officials from our Embassy in Cairo raised the Rafah crossing with the Egyptian authorities on 19 December 2019, highlighting the need to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Ministers and officials regularly raise the situation in Gaza with the Egyptian Government both in London and in Cairo, and will continue to do so.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19840/>

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL1815] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the shooting of a 15 year old Palestinian child near Kufr Qaddum on 30 January and reports that there was a delay to his transportation to hospital.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised the case in question, we remain concerned at reported instances of excessive use of force by Israeli forces. We call on Israel to adhere to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. We urge the Israeli authorities to thoroughly investigate every alleged instance and bring those responsible to

justice. We have also stressed the importance of the Israel security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children. We did so most recently at the UN Security Council on 21 January. Free movement of patients and medical personnel is vital to the effectiveness of care. Delays to treatment can endanger the health and lives of patients.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-02-24/HL1815/>

*The UK statement at the UN, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/peace-for-both-israelis-and-palestinians-is-long-overdue>

### **Palestinians: Trade**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL1816] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the prevention of Palestinian agricultural exports via Jordan by Israeli authorities.

Answered on: 04 March 2020

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is concerned about the impact of recent Israeli trade restrictions on the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The British Government strongly supports the principle of free trade. UK businesses should be free to import Palestinian products without barriers. Her Majesty's Ambassador to Israel has raised this issue with the Government of Israel, most recently on 12 February. We welcome the agreement reached by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, on 20 February, to lift their respective trade restrictions. We urge both sides to ensure implementation of this agreement.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-02-24/HL1816/>

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## **Foreign Affairs**

### **House of Lords Written Answer**

#### **Identity Cards: Religion**

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench)** [HL1934] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with governments of countries that require religious affiliation to be stated on identity cards or other official documents about such a requirement.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK opposes the requirement that religious affiliation should be stated on identity cards or other official documents. In Myanmar for example, the UK has supported the recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Commission's to reform the 1982 Citizenship Law, and has urged the Myanmar Government to fully implement them. This would ensure that citizenship, and ID cards, are not linked to ethnic or religious status. Defending and promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is a longstanding human rights priority for the British Government. We actively promote the importance of FoRB and tackling discrimination on the basis of religious identity through our diplomatic activity both bilaterally, and through multilateral fora such as the UN.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-02-26/HL1934/>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Assisted Dying Bill**

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

#### **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>

#### **Genocide Determination Bill**

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

#### **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/marriageact1949amendment.html>

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

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

### Scottish Parliament

#### **Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill**

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

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

#### **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>

#### **Hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland: an independent review** (closing date 31 March 2020)

<https://www.hatecrimereviewni.org.uk/sites/hcr/files/media-files/Consultation%20Paper%20Feb%202020.pdf>

#### **Amendments to the organ donation regulations (Wales)** (closing date 30 April 2020)

<https://gov.wales/amendments-organ-donation-regulations>

#### **Regulating Independent Educational Institutions** (closing date 8 May 2020)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/regulating-independent-education-institutions/>

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