



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs
Israel

Relevant Legislation
Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Hospitals: Ministers of Religion

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [81608] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support (a) chaplains and (b) other spiritual and religious workers working in hospitals and clinical settings during the covid-19 outbreak.

Helen Whately: Chaplains and others working in hospitals and clinical settings can access any of the support offers available on the Our NHS People website at the following link:

www.people.nhs.uk

The website provides support for staff as individuals as well as advice on how to support colleagues. This includes support with bereavement and wellbeing issues relating to loss experienced through work. Separately, Our Frontline provides round-the-clock mental health support for any frontline health, care, emergency, education and key workers which includes access to bereavement support where needed. This is available at the following link:

www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/ourfrontline

Alongside this national support offer, spiritual and religious workers will also be able to access support provided locally.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-08-28/81608>

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Guidance: High Holy Day services and gatherings COVID-19 checklist

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/high-holy-day-services-and-gatherings-covid-19-checklist>

Scottish Government

Organ and tissue donation opt out system

Legislation to introduce an opt out system of organ and tissue donation for deceased donors will come into effect on 26 March 2021.

The new law will add to the package of measures already in place which have led to significant increases in donation and transplantation over the last decade. ...

Under the new law, if an adult does not opt out of donation they will be deemed to have authorised donation for the purposes of transplantation. This is subject to the safeguards in the new law which seek to ensure that donation will not go ahead where it would be against the person's wishes.

Public Health Minister Joe FitzPatrick said: "Scotland has made huge strides in increasing transplant rates over the past decade, thanks to the generosity of those who choose to become donors and their families.

"The move to an opt out system is part of a package of measures to continue to improve transplantation rates – and the lives of those for whom the wait continues.

"In Scotland there are an average of more than 500 people waiting for an organ transplant at any one time, so it's important that we do all we can to save and improve the lives of those on the waiting list.

"Only around 1% of people die in a way that makes organ donation possible, so every opportunity for donation is very precious.

"I would encourage people to continue to make a decision about donation, record their decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register and discuss it with their family and friends so they know what you would want to happen." ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.scot/news/organ-and-tissue-donation-opt-out-system/>

Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): wedding ceremonies and civil partnership registrations

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnership-registrations/>

TOP

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Palestinians: Coronavirus

Rushanara Ali (Labour) [85042] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the humanitarian situation in Gaza in relation to recent locally-transmitted cases of covid-19.

Rushanara Ali (Labour) [85043] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the capacity of the health system in Gaza to cope with the recent increase in locally-transmitted covid-19 cases.

Rushanara Ali (Labour) [85047] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to support the covid-19 response in the occupied Palestinian territories.

James Cleverly: The UK Government remains deeply concerned by the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), which has now reached over 30,000 (as of 6 September). The capacity of the Palestinian health system, especially in Gaza, to cope with the increase in COVID-19 cases has been severely impaired by longstanding Israeli movement and access restrictions and shortages in specialised staff, drugs and equipment.

The UK's recent £840,000 funding contribution has enabled the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF to purchase and co-ordinate the delivery of medical equipment, treat critical care patients, train frontline public health personnel and scale up laboratory testing capacity. The Foreign Secretary also recently announced a further £2.7 million funding to UN agencies to provide food assistance, medical supplies and personal protection for the most vulnerable Palestinians.

In addition to our commitment to funding, our Embassy in Tel Aviv and Consulate-General in Jerusalem frequently urge the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to take steps to improve conditions in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-04/85042>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-04/85043>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-04/85047>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7734] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking with the government of Israel to provide protection to Palestinian farmers in the West Bank from attacks by Israeli settlers.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are troubled by reports of assaults on farmers and vandalism of agricultural land. We continue to raise with Israeli counterparts our concerns about Israeli settler violence, and continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-02/hl7734>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL7735] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, or intend to make, to the government of Israel about Yanun and other Palestinian villages in the West Bank whose land is reportedly being confiscated for Israeli settlements.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made representations on these reports, it has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to avoid actions that make it more difficult to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-02/hl7735>

United Nations

Economic and Social Council Adopts Texts Regarding Palestinian Population, Other Agenda Items, But Fails to Agree on Sustainable Development Ministerial Declaration

... The Council then adopted ... the draft resolution "Economic and social repercussions

of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” (document E/2021/L.6). By the terms of the resolution, the Council called for accountability on attacks against Palestinians and urged the international community to continue to pursue policies concerning all illegal practices in occupied territories. It also demanded that Israel comply with the April 1994 Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and called upon Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed due to its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Calling for the full opening of Gaza border crossings, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), the Council also stressed the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods there, as well as to and from the outside world. ...

... the Council adopted the resolution “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women” (document E/2021/L.7). By its terms, the Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately cease all measures contrary to international law, as well as discriminatory legislation, policies and actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, that violate the human rights of the Palestinian people. It also called for urgent measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 904 (1994).

Prior to the adoption of those resolutions, several representatives explained their delegations’ position, with Germany’s delegate, on behalf of the European Union, saying that members will vote in favour of “L.6”, but concerns remained. Noting that the term “Palestinian Government” is understood to refer to the Palestinian Authority, he said the use of the term “Palestine” cannot be construed as recognizing it as a State, and the Union has not expressed a position on the term “forced displacement”. ...

... an observer for the State of Palestine said that “L.6” reasserts the economic and social rights of the Palestinian people in the face of persistent violations that undermine their ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and their fundamental rights. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/ecosoc7026.doc.htm>

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

<https://undocs.org/en/E/2021/L.6>

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

<https://undocs.org/en/E/2021/L.7>

TOP

Relevant Legislation

** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

Scottish Parliament

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

Getting Married: A Consultation Paper on Weddings Law (closing date 3 December 2020)

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/weddings/#weddings-consultation-paper>

TOP

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