



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Israel: Palestinians

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [38897] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 21 April 2020 to Question 34965 on Israel: Palestinians, which organisations (a) distributed funds and (b) have received UK funds from the People to People programme.

James Cleverly: Our three-year People to People programme aimed to bring together Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate on issues which can have a positive impact on both communities, helping to build understanding between people on both sides of the conflict in support of a peaceful, negotiated resolution.

Our programme was implemented by Search for Common Ground, who delivered some activities directly and worked through partners in areas requiring specialist expertise. These partners were: the Jerusalem Intercultural Centre, the Musalaha network, and the Al-Quds Public Health School.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-22/38897/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-03-25/34965/>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Israeli annexation plans would lead to “cascade of bad human rights consequences”, says UN expert

An independent UN human rights expert warned today that the new Israeli coalition government's plan to proceed with annexing significant parts of the occupied West Bank, including the Jordan Valley, will create "a cascade of bad human rights consequences".

"Israel's decision to unilaterally march ahead with the planned annexation on July 1 undermines human rights in the region, and would be a severe body blow to the rules-based international order," said Michael Lynk, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation

of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967. It would also further undermine any remaining prospect for a just and negotiated settlement, he said.

"If Israel's annexation plans proceed, what would be left of the West Bank would become a Palestinian Bantustan, an archipelago of disconnected islands of territory, completely surrounded and divided up by Israel and unconnected to the outside world," the Special Rapporteur said.

"The plan would crystalize a 21st century apartheid, leaving in its wake the demise of the Palestinians' right to self-determination. Legally, morally, politically, this is entirely unacceptable."

Human rights violations arising from Israeli occupation would only intensify after the annexation, Lynk said. "Already, we are witnessing forced evictions and displacement, land confiscation and alienation, settler violence, the appropriation of natural resources, and the imposition of a two-tiered system of unequal political, social and economic rights based on ethnicity." ...

The Special Rapporteur expressed deep alarm that Israel's annexation plans are being supported and facilitated by the United States. "On many fronts, the US was a positive force in the post-war years for the creation of our modern system of international law. It understood that a strong network of rights and responsibilities was the best path to global peace and prosperity. Now, it is actively endorsing, and participating in, a flagrant violation of international law. Its legal duty is to isolate perpetrators of human rights violations, not abet them."

Lynk said the United Nations and its member states could no longer just offer criticism without consequences. "The looming annexation is a political litmus test for the international community. This annexation will not be reversed through rebukes, nor will the 53-year-old occupation die of old age," the Special Rapporteur said.

"As I stated in March, the international community should review its extensive menu of sanctions and countermeasures to stem this march towards further illegality. Settlement products should not enter the international marketplace. Agreements, existing and proposed, with Israel should be reviewed. The current investigations at the International Criminal Court should be supported," the UN human rights expert underscored.

"There has to be a cost to the defiance of international law," the Special Rapporteur said. "Only this can compel the Israeli political leadership to do the right thing."

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25857&LangID=E>

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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>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

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

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

Regulating Independent Educational Institutions (closing date 8 May 2020)

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

Protecting places of worship (closing date 28 June 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill (closing date not stated)

The Scottish Government welcomes your views on any aspect of the Bill as it begins its passage through Parliament. Queries should be headed 'Hate Crime Bill Launch' and sent to ConnectedCommunities@gov.scot

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