



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Lords Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Coroners

Lord Leigh of Hurley (Conservative) [HL5383] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deceased persons are currently being held by coroners in England awaiting registration of death.

Lord Leigh of Hurley (Conservative) [HL5384] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current average waiting time between the arrival of a person whose death was unexplained with a coroner and issuing a death certificate.

Lord Keen of Elie: The Ministry of Justice collects statistics on deaths reported to coroners on an annual basis but does not have details of deaths that are under investigation. The Office of National Statistics publishes the number of registered deaths but does not distinguish between deaths referred to coroners and other deaths so it is not possible to determine the average waiting time.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-08/HL5383/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-08/HL5384/>

Welsh Government

Updated Guidance on reopening places of worship: coronavirus

<https://gov.wales/guidance-reopening-places-worship-coronavirus-html>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Iyad Hallaq

Virendra Sharma (Labour) [61457] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the killing of disabled Palestinian Eyad Hallaq by Israeli border police on 30 May 2020.

James Cleverly: As the UK Consul General in Jerusalem and the UK Ambassador in Tel Aviv stated on 31 May, we are deeply saddened to hear about the death of Iyad Khairi Hallaq after he was shot by Israeli police in East Jerusalem. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family. We urge restraint in the use of live fire by the Israel Defense Forces. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account. The perpetual cycle of violence must end.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-18/61457/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Iyad Hallaq

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL5608] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel about the death of Iyad Halaq in East Jerusalem on 30 May.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As the UK Consul General in Jerusalem and the UK Ambassador in Tel Aviv stated on 31 May, we are deeply saddened to hear about the death of Iyad Khairi Hallaq after he was shot by Israeli police in East Jerusalem. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family. We urge restraint in the use of live fire by the Israel Defense Forces. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations and if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account. The perpetual cycle of violence must end.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-11/HL5608/>

Israel: Palestinians

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL5611] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the plan submitted by the Palestinian Prime Minister to the United States, Russia, EU and United Nations on 9 June; and, following the remarks by the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa on 11 May (HC Deb, col 20), what steps they are taking to prevent the annexation by the government of Israel of parts of the West Bank.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcome the proposals that the Palestinian Authority has made for renewed dialogue. We urge the parties to find a means of restarting negotiations, and avoiding unilateral action. The Foreign Secretary made clear our concerns about reports that the new Israeli Government coalition has reached an agreement, which may pave the way for annexation of parts of the West Bank, during a call with the Israeli Alternate Prime Minister Gantz on 20 May and Foreign Minister Ashkenazi on 2 June. We also reiterated our concerns at the UN Security Council remote meeting on the Middle East Peace Process on 20 May. The UK position is clear: any unilateral moves towards annexation of parts of the

West Bank by Israel would be damaging to efforts to restart peace negotiations and contrary to international law. We will continue to press Israel and the Palestinians strongly on the need to return to negotiations to achieve peace and the realist action of a two state solution.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-11/HL5611/>

The remarks by the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-11/debates/A7E46890-26D7-44E5-9CEA-62C28416E0E0/OccupiedPalestinianTerritories>

The UK speech to the UN Security Council referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/securing-a-peaceful-future-for-israelis-and-palestinians>

United Nations

Secretary-General's virtual briefing to the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, including the Question of Palestine

I address you today with a deep sense of concern over the evolving situation in Israel and Palestine.

We are at a watershed moment.

Israel's threat to annex parts of the occupied West Bank has alarmed Palestinians, many Israelis and the broader international community.

If implemented, annexation would constitute a most serious violation of international law, grievously harm the prospect of a two-State solution and undercut the possibilities of a renewal of negotiations.

I call on the Israeli Government to abandon its annexation plans.

The Palestinian leadership has reacted by considering itself absolved of all bilateral agreements with Israel and the United States.

Increased economic fragility as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced donor support, and the recent Palestinian decision to stop accepting clearance revenues that Israel collects on behalf of Palestinian Authority risk increasing the hardship of the Palestinian people. ...

The goal is achieving the vision of two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security within secure and recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

I will continue to consistently speak out against any unilateral steps that would undermine peace and the chances for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through meaningful negotiations. ...

Leaders must act wisely and swiftly and demonstrate the will to advance the goal of a just and lasting peace. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-06-24/secretary-generals-virtual-briefing-the-security-council-the-situation-the-middle-east-including-the-question-of-palestine-delivered>

Human Rights Council closes forty-third regular session after adopting 43 texts

... In a resolution on ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, adopted by a vote of 22 in favour, 8 against and 17 abstentions, the Council requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on how all parties can fulfil their obligations in

implementing the recommendations reviewed by the High Commissioner in 2017, including measures of accountability and legal measures to be taken by states, and to present a report to the Council at its forty-sixth session, to be followed by an interactive dialogue. ... In a resolution on human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan, adopted by a vote of 26 in favour, 17 against and 4 abstentions, the Council calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council determines that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken or to be taken by Israel that seek to alter the character and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan are null and void, and again calls upon States Members of the United Nations not to recognize any of the above-mentioned legislative or administrative measures.

In a resolution on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, adopted by a vote of 36 in favour, 2 against and 9 abstentions as orally revised, the Council requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the consequences of the intensification of settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around East Jerusalem and the so-called E-1 area, for the contiguity of the Palestinian Territory and their implications for the rights of the Palestinian people, and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its forty-sixth session.

In a resolution on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, adopted by a vote of 42 in favour, 2 against and 3 abstentions, the Council demands that Israel withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Council further requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the allocation of water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to recommend measures to ensure the implementation of equitable access to safe drinking water in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with international law, and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its forty-sixth session.

In a resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, adopted by a vote of 43 in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions, the Council calls upon all States to ensure their obligations of non-recognition, non-aid or assistance with regard to the serious breaches of peremptory norms of international law by Israel. The Council further urges all States to adopt measures as required to promote the realization of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and to render assistance to the United Nations in carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter regarding the implementation of this right. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25990&LangID=E>

Ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/L.36>

Human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/L.28>

Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/L.37/Rev.1>

Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

<https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/43/L.38/REV.1>

Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/L.39>

UN agency assisting Palestinians working at ‘full capacity with inadequate resources

“Every day, UNRWA is contributing to human development and stability in an increasingly volatile and challenging context,” said UN Secretary-General António Guterres ... “Not only does the agency provide a lifeline for millions of Palestine refugees, he continued, it is also critical for regional stability. ...”

New chief Philippe Lazzarini ... said the crisis has come as the Middle East enters [“a period of renewed uncertainty”](#), with Israel threatening to annex parts of the West Bank and Lebanon facing economic chaos, while the “seemingly endless” Syrian conflict rages on.

“In an unpredictable and unstable environment, we need, more than ever, a predictable and stable UNRWA ... But our greatest challenge is our financial stability. We are operating at full capacity with inadequate resources. ...”

Year after year, month after month, UNRWA is on the edge of a financial collapse. This cannot continue ... Any reduction in UNRWA’s services will only cause more suffering for a people that have suffered for more than any people should have to endure ...”

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066932>

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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>

SPICe briefing on the Bill as amended at Stage 2

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/DPLR/2020/6/23/Civil-Partnership-Scotland--Bill-as-amended-at-Stage-2/DPLRS052020R37.pdf>

Stage 3 consideration of amendments

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12713&i=114972#ScotParlOR>

Stage 3 debate

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12713&i=114989#ScotParlOR>

Bill as passed

<https://beta.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/current-bills/civil-partnership-scotland-bill/stage-3/civil-partnership-scotland-bill-as-passed.pdf>

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>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 4 days**

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 24 July 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/115038.aspx>

Legislative proposals for religion, values and ethics [Wales] (closing date 28 July 2020)

<https://gov.wales/legislative-proposals-religion-values-and-ethics>

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