



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Israel

Relevant Legislation
Consultations

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Israel: Cemeteries

Afzal Khan (Labour) [66194] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the recent bulldozing of a historic Muslim cemetery in Jaffa.

Afzal Khan (Labour) [66195] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the desecration of Muslim cemeteries in order to build housing projects.

James Cleverly: We have not made representations on this incident. The UK acknowledges the importance of preserving religious sites, including cemeteries. That is why defending Freedom of Religion or Belief, and promoting respect between different communities, is a human rights policy priority for the UK.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-29/66194/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-29/66195/>

Israel: Palestinians

Afzal Khan (Labour) [66196] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to promote a two-state solution and prevent further Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian territory.

James Cleverly: We continue to work closely with international partners strongly advocating a two-state solution and encouraging a return to meaningful negotiations. The Foreign Secretary did so most recently in a meeting with French and German Foreign Ministers on 19 June. He has also reiterated to Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry on 21 May and Jordanian Foreign Minister Safadi on 28 May. The Prime Minister has conveyed the UK's opposition to unilateral annexation to Prime Minister Netanyahu on multiple occasions, including in a phone call in February and a letter in July. The Foreign Secretary reiterated this message in his

introductory calls with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Gantz on 20 May and Foreign Minister Ashkenazi on 2 June. I also did so at the UN Security Council last week.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-29/66196/>

The Minister's speech to the UN Security Council, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/urging-a-negotiated-two-state-solution-between-israelis-and-palestinians>

House of Lords Written Answers

Rami Aman

Baroness Altmann (Conservative) [HL5631] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in response to the arrest of Rami Aman in Gaza in April for engaging in online dialogue with Israelis; and whether they have called for his release.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We strongly condemn the detention of Rami Aman by Hamas. The UK retains a policy of no contact with Hamas in its entirety. Hamas has de facto control over the Gaza Strip. We monitor the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories closely, including reporting on human rights violations in the FCO's annual Human Rights and Democracy Report.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-15/HL5631/>

The Human Rights and Democracy reports referred to above can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-and-democracy-report-2018>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL5726] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the impact of existing Israeli (1) settlements, and (2) infrastructure, in the West Bank on the viability of a future Palestinian state.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace and threaten the physical viability of a two state solution. We want to see a contiguous West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as part of a viable and sovereign Palestinian state, based on 1967 borders. We continue to urge Israel to halt settlement expansion immediately.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-15/HL5726/>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL5727] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the (1) government of the United States, and (2) the government of Israel, about the new boundaries of the Palestinian Territories after any proposed annexation.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: 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 Alternate Israeli Prime Minister Gantz on 20 May and Israeli Foreign Minister Ashkenazi on 2 June. We have also reiterated our position to the US. 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. Any changes to the status quo cannot be taken forward without an agreement negotiated by the parties themselves.

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying Bill

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

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>

Consultations ** new or updated today

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>