



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Commission for Countering Extremism

#### **Report looking at how hateful extremists have been exploiting the current pandemic**

The government needs to ensure that their response to dealing with COVID-19 and future crises takes into account the significant threat of hateful extremism and the dangerous narratives spread by conspiracy theories. ...

Through the use of conspiracy theories and fake news, the Commission has found that hateful extremists have used divisive, xenophobic and racist narratives to sow division and undermine the social fabric of our country. The CCE warns that investing in counter extremism work and urgently publishing a new strategy is critical as extremists will seek to capitalise on the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 to cause further long-term instability, fear and division in Britain.

Lead Commissioner Sara Khan says: The pandemic has not discouraged extremists from propagating their hateful ideologies. On the contrary they have, as is always the case in a crisis, fully exploited the lockdown to promote dangerous conspiracy theories and disinformation, most notably online. They seek to mainstream extremist narratives in society, for the sole purpose of inciting hatred, violence, public disorder and a breakdown in community cohesion. ...

The impact of extremist propaganda and disinformation to our democracy cannot be overstated. These conspiracy theories are harmful, dangerous and are used by extremists to cause division and breed hate. This is why I have called on policy makers to develop a system to classify dangerous conspiracy theories based on the harm they cause. This will help practitioners and social media platforms better challenge harmful conspiracy theories before they escalate. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/report-looking-at-how-hateful-extremists-have-been-exploiting-the-current-pandemic>

#### **COVID-19: How hateful extremists are exploiting the pandemic**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/898925/CCE\\_Briefing\\_Note\\_001.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/898925/CCE_Briefing_Note_001.pdf)

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### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Israeli Settlements

**Owen Thompson (SNP)** [66937] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his (a) Israeli and (b) US counterpart on Israel's potential annexation of the West Bank.

**James Cleverly:** The Prime Minister has conveyed the UK's opposition to unilateral annexation to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on multiple occasions, including in a phone call on 6 July and a letter in June. 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. The Foreign Secretary has also made clear our opposition to annexation to the US. 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, Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry on 21 May and Jordanian Foreign Minister Safadi on 28 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 continue to urge Israel not to take these steps.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-30/66937/>

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## 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>

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## 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>

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