



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs

Israel

Foreign Affairs

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

Home Affairs

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Sub-Committee on Online Harms and Disinformation

Online safety and online harms

Q2 Dr Talita de Souza Dias, Shaw Foundation Junior Research Fellow in Law, Jesus College, University of Oxford: ... the definition of harm is way too vague. It is a definition that includes indirect harms. For example, if certain content influences or drives somebody to do something that might cause some harm. ...

The definition includes both material or physical harms and also psychological harms and that is very subjective. ...

Q3 ... the best way forward is to, at the very least, include context as an element of the definition of harm so that platforms and the regulator can assess the content in context. Even terrorist content might not be as clear-cut as one might think. For example, in the context of the Israeli/Palestine conflict earlier this year, posts that featured the name of a mosque, which were not terrorist content, were taken down erroneously because there was no assessment of the context of that content. ...

Q11 ... the Bill as it stands is quite vague. ... companies are going to err on the side of censorship. They are going to take down everything, especially with regards to illegal content ...

... probably most of that content is not going to be taken down by a human. It is an algorithm and algorithms are bound to fail ... the majority of content, whether it is disinformation, alleged disinformation, whether it is offensive, satirical, nudity, all of these kinds of content are going to be taken down. ...

The Bill is setting the stage for enhanced censorship ...

Q16 Kevin Brennan (Labour): ... You seemed to suggest that because the companies don't like the idea of someone looking inside the magic box, that therefore it cannot happen. Isn't that just an example of the power that tech companies have, even over you as an academic in this field? People assume they have the power to prevent national state Governments from wanting to regulate their activities appropriately?

Dr Dias: Yes, it is depressing and the law is on their side, I would say, because they can

always claim that it is an issue of intellectual property. ...

Q18 Kevin Brennan: ... you thought that the draft Bill as proposed was vague in detail in relation to illegal content. In what way can you be vague about illegal content? Either it is illegal or it is legal.

Dr Dias: The problem here is that, first of all, illegal content includes things that might be criminal offences or other types of wrongs like civil wrongs. There is no differentiation there. This is important because, depending on the severity of the content, different measures might be applicable. ...

The second issue is that, even though illegal content might correspond to content that is already illegal under the law ... here we are imposing new limitations, limitations to freedom of expression, because you are talking about speech acts. ...

Q23 Professor Alan Renwick, Professor of Democratic Politics and Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit, University College London: ... if freedom of expression matters it matters for everyone, so I am not quite clear why we should have a specific carve-out for journalistic content and content of democratic importance. ...

Q24 ... As we have moved into the digital age, the distinction between journalists and the rest of us has rather diminished. All of us have very important rights of free expression and all of us, if we are saying things in public, have duties to have regard to the effects of what we say upon society as a whole. ...

Q30 Alex Davies-Jones (Labour): ... We know that Germany was the first country in the world to try to take a stand on this and it introduced landmark legislation in 2017, the unique hate speech law to try to get online accountability for this. It has recently been highly criticised for not working, particularly by women and public officials who feel that nothing changed and that it has made the situation worse by pushing it into unregulated websites and social media accounts. What can we learn from Germany to stop that happening with this legislation, and how does our legislation differ from that and other jurisdictions in the world?

Dr Dias: ... The problem is ... that that will drive companies to self-censor themselves, to over-censor. ...

We should not require companies to just take down content immediately in one hour or in two hours. There has to be a little bit more time and there have to be alternative measures to just content takedowns. As I said earlier, the emphasis should be on the duty of care rather than the specific types of content that are published online and that are left online. ...

Q33 ... One thing to bear in mind is that we cannot think of these companies as amorphous entities. They are different people, different teams and sometimes these teams are isolated from each other purposefully. ...

It is important to also remember that regulation is not the antithesis or the opposite to freedom of expression. It is a necessary safeguard because people need to have clear notice of how their freedom of expression is going to be limited. The more specific, the clearer the regulation the better it will be for freedom of expression. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2788/html/>

Department for Education

Out-of-school settings: Updated COVID-19 guidance for parents and carers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/out-of-school-settings-covid-19-guidance-for-parents-and-carers>

Scottish Parliament Motion

Jackson Carlaw (Conservative) [S6M-01367] Incredible Interfaith Community Efforts to Support Afghan Refugees Arriving in Scotland – That the Parliament commends the fantastic interfaith efforts in the Greater Glasgow area for securing thousands of donations to support the men, women and children who are arriving in Scotland from Afghanistan; notes that the initiative, led by Sammy and Vicci Stein, has resulted in huge amounts of items such as baby products, toys, clothes and household goods being donated; welcomes that the appeal from the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council developed into an interfaith campaign, with members of the Muslim community playing a pivotal role in securing additional facilities to help store the large amounts of items that have been donated; understands that within just a number of days, almost every available storage space at the Maccabi Centre, Jewish Care Scotland and Cosgrave Care buildings, at May Terrace, in Giffnock, were filled with donations; acknowledges that the two schools belonging to the world's first Jewish-Catholic joint campus of Calderwood Lodge and St Clare's primaries, in Newton Mearns, made a vital contribution to the appeal through the provision of toiletries and women's sanitary products; understands that the donations will first be made available to a number of Afghan refugee charities, but because of the massive generosity from those who donated to this incredible initiative, there is a surplus of items and these will be given to other worthwhile causes, and recognises the fantastic leadership of Sammy and Vicci Stein, the incredible work undertaken by members of different faiths, including the Muslim and Jewish communities, and every person and organisation, including Calderwood Lodge and St Clare's primary schools, for taking the time to offer donations that will support Afghan families to be resettled in Scotland.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-01367>

Welsh Government FoI Release

Antisemitism

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-09/atism15459doc1.pdf>

TOP

Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Israel: Jordan

Jim Shannon (DUP) [[51695] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps she is taking to help improve relations between Israel and Jordan.

James Cleverly: Both Jordan and Israel are close friends and partners of the UK. We welcome recent engagement between the two, including the meeting between PM Bennett and HM King Abdullah II on 29 June, and new bilateral agreements on water and trade. During her meeting with Jordanian Foreign Minister Safadi on Monday 20 September, the Foreign Secretary discussed how the UK, Jordan and Israel could work together to advance regional security and prosperity.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51695>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL2654] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the number of Palestinians killed or injured by live fire from Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank so far this year.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise the issue of the high numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israel Defence Forces in the West Bank and Gaza with the Israeli authorities, encouraging them to carry out transparent investigations into whether the use of live fire had been appropriate. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population and urge restraint in the use of live fire.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2654>

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL2656] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Israeli authorities demolished a Palestinian kindergarten in Beit Safafa on 17 August under pretext of illegal building; and what steps they plan to take, if any, to prevent the future demolition of Palestinian homes and other buildings in Jerusalem.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's opposition to demolition of Palestinian property, including schools, is long-standing and well known. The British Embassy regularly raises the issue of demolitions with the Government of Israel, most recently on 10 August. The former Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity, including in East Jerusalem, with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May.

We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and are clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2656>

West Bank: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL2657] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take, if any, to protect Palestinians in the West Bank from attack by Israeli settlers and forces.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance to bring those responsible to justice. We 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/2021-09-13/hl2657>

West Bank: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL2668] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Palestinian children in the West Bank are facing increased violence from Israeli settlers.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance to bring those responsible to justice. We also continue to stress the importance of the Israeli

security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2668>

West Bank: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL2667] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Israeli forces (1) shot and killed four Palestinian men during raids on the Jenin refugee camp on 16 August, and (2) prevented Palestinian ambulances from reaching the men before detaining their bodies.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of these reports. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we urge the Government of Israel to conduct swift and transparent investigations. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population and urge restraint in the use of live fire. The long-lasting movement restrictions and the serious constraints imposed by the occupation can impact on the provision of medical care. The wounded or critically ill should be able to access the urgent medical care they need. We urge all sides to treat the dead with respect and return any bodies they are holding.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2667>

Occupied Territories: Press Freedom

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL2669] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take, if any, to protect journalistic freedom in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to the protection of media freedom around the world. We continue to reiterate the importance of a free and open press, and freedom of expression to the Israeli Government and Palestinian Authority.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2669>

West Bank: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL2670] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take, if any, to protect Palestinian homes and agricultural structures in Area C of the West Bank from destruction by Israeli forces.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's opposition to demolition of Palestinian homes and structures is long-standing and well known. The British Embassy regularly raises the issue of demolitions with the Government of Israel, most recently on 10 August. The former Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity, including in East Jerusalem, with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May.

We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and are clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2670>

Gaza: Reconstruction

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top (Labour) [HL2733] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of proposals of the new government to Israel for the reconstruction of Gaza while isolating Hamas.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcome Foreign Minister Lapid's speech on 12 September, proposing positive policy suggestions to support economic development in Gaza and greater security for Israel. A long-term solution for Gaza is needed to prevent further conflict and make progress towards a two-state

solution. The UK will continue to urge the parties to prioritise progress towards reaching a durable solution for Gaza and to take the necessary practical steps to ensure Gaza's reconstruction and economic recovery.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-15/hl2733>

Lebanon: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL2655] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is one of the leading donors in supporting Lebanon to host both Syrian and Palestinian refugees. Since 2011, the UK has allocated over £780 million in humanitarian and development funding to Lebanon. Our humanitarian assistance will continue to promote access to education and provide those most in need with timely, flexible assistance and protection services to cover their basic survival needs and reduce gender-based violence, saving lives and reducing suffering. The UK is also a key supporter to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides vital services to Palestinian refugees across their five fields of operation including in Lebanon. Our annual contribution to UNRWA's programme budget helps UNRWA to provide basic education to more than 533,000 children a year (half of whom are girls), access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and social safety net assistance for around 255,000 of the most vulnerable across the region.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-13/hl2655>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

All parties to Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be open to further dialogue: Statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council Briefing on the Middle East

... the United Kingdom welcomes recent engagement between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian leadership ... We urge further direct engagement and call on both parties to work together to tackle immediate and long-term threats to peace and stability. ... The UK wants to see greater cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians, including on economic initiatives, to help support the recovery of Gaza, boost the Palestinian economy and improve the lives of all Palestinians living in the OPTs.

However, these initiatives need to be part of a political pathway. All parties need to take steps to avoid exacerbating tensions, and to avoid unhelpful rhetoric. ...

... we remain concerned by Israel's ongoing settlement expansion, as well as the demolition of Palestinian property and resultant displacement of protected persons, such as prospective demolitions and evictions in Silwan, Walaja, and Sheikh Jarrah. We urge Israel to allow for more legal avenues for Palestinian construction.

... we have seen a worrying upward trend in Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces' live fire throughout 2021 ... We urge restraint on all sides. Israeli investigations should be transparent, comprehensive and, where there has been excessive use of force, those responsible held to account.

We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinian civilians and aid workers. We express particular concern about the reported attack on 15-year-old Palestinian, Tareq Zubeidi, on 17 August. Communities must be protected from violence and harassment. Such incidents must be investigated fully and those responsible brought to justice.

... we continue to call on the Palestinian Authority to adhere to international standards on freedom of expression, association and assembly and urge respect for human rights. ...

I reiterate that the UK condemns unequivocally Hamas's indiscriminate attacks against

Israel, including the use of incendiary balloons. We call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their rocket fire against Israel.

... the UK welcomed Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid's speech proposing positive policy suggestions to support economic development in Gaza and greater security for Israel. A long-term solution for Gaza is needed not only to end the cycle of violence, but also to make progress towards the two-state solution: a solution to which the UK remains firmly committed.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/all-parties-to-israeli-palestinian-conflict-must-be-open-to-further-dialogue>

United Nations

Statement by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet to the United Nations General Assembly General Debate of the 76th Session

Israel is a lighthouse in a stormy sea. A beacon of democracy, diverse by design, innovative by nature and eager to contribute to the world – despite being in the toughest neighborhood on earth.

We are an ancient nation. Returned - to our ancient homeland, Revived - our ancient language, Restored - our ancient sovereignty. Israel is a miracle of Jewish revival. ...

For way too long, Israel was defined by wars with our neighbors. But this is not what Israel is about. This is not what the people of Israel are about. ...

Israelis want to lead a good life, take care of our families, and build a better world for our children. Which means that from time to time, we might need to leave our jobs, say goodbye to our families, and rush to the battlefield to defend our country ...

They should not be judged for it. ...

In Israel, after four elections in two years, with a fifth looming, the people yearned for an antidote: Calm. Stability. An honest attempt for political normalcy. ...

About a hundred days ago my partners and I formed a new government in Israel. The most diverse government in our history. What started as a political accident, can now turn into a purpose. And that purpose is unity.

Today we sit together, around one table. We speak to each other with respect, we act with decency, and we carry a message: Things can be different. ...

The second great disease we're all facing is the coronavirus, sweeping the world. ...

We developed a model, which fuses the wisdom of science with the power of policymaking. ...

Lockdowns, restrictions, quarantines – cannot work in the long run. Our model, rather than locking people down in passive sleep-mode, recruits them to the effort. ...

We formed a national task force that meets everyday, to bypass slow governmental bureaucracy, make quick decisions and act on them right away. ...

Running a country during a pandemic is not only about health. It's about carefully balancing all aspects of life that are affected by corona, especially Jobs and education. ...

The ancient Jewish text, the Talmud, says that: "Whoever saves one life, is as if he saved an entire world", And that's what we aspire to do. ...

While Israel strives to do good, we cannot lose sight for one moment of what's happening in our neighborhood. Israel is, quite literally, surrounded by Hezbollah, Shia militias, Islamic Jihad, and Hamas. On our borders. These terror groups seek to dominate the Middle East and spread radical Islam across the world. What do they all have in common? They all want to destroy my country, And they're all backed by Iran. ...

If you think Iranian terror is confined to the Israel– you're wrong. Just this year, Iran made operational a new deadly terror unit – swarms of killer UAVs armed with lethal weapons that can attack any place any time. ... Iran has already used these deadly UAVs—called

Shahed 136-- to attack Saudi Arabia, US targets in Iraq and civilian ships at sea, killing A Brit and a Romanian. ...

In 1988, Iran set up a "death commission" that ordered the mass murder of 5,000 political activists. They were hanged from cranes. This "death commission" was made up of four people; Ebrahim Raisi - Iran's new president, was one of them. ... Raisi's also oversaw the murder of Iranian children. ...

One of the witnesses of this massacre, stated in her testimony, that when Raisi would finish a round of murder, he'd throw a party, pocketing the money of those he just executed... and then would sit down to eat cream cakes. He celebrated the murder of his own people, by devouring cream cakes.

And now Raisi is Iran's new president. ...

Evidence which clearly proves Iran's intentions for nuclear weapons in secret sites in Toorkooz-abad, Teheran & Marivan — is ignored. Iran's nuclear program has hit a watershed moment; and so has our tolerance. Words do not stop centrifuges from spinning.

There are those in the world who seem to view Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons as an inevitable reality, or they've just become tired of hearing about it. Israel doesn't have that privilege. We will not tire. We will not allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon. ...

But not everything is dark in the Middle East. Alongside worrying trends, there are also rays of light. First and foremost the growing ties Israel is forging with Arab and Muslim countries. Ties that began 42 years ago with Israel's historic peace agreement with Egypt, continued 27 years ago with Israel's peace agreement with Jordan, and even more recently with the "Abraham Accords" — that normalized our relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco. More is to come. ...

Alongside our old friends, we are gaining new friends — in the Middle East and beyond. Last week this manifested itself with the defeat of the racist, anti-Semitic, Durban conference. This conference was originally meant to be against racism, but over the years turned into a conference of racism — against Israel and the Jewish people. And the world's had enough of this.

I thank the 38 countries (38!) who chose truth over lies, and skipped the conference. And to those countries who chose to participate in this farce, I say: Attacking Israel doesn't make you morally superior ...

Israel is a nation of great hope, a nation that has brought the heritage of the Torah to life in modern-day Israel, a nation of an unbreakable spirit. ...

To read the full transcript see

https://estatemnts.unmeetings.org/estatemnts/10.0010/20210927/1kFsDvxNY5Xk/el5hEoDqcNJK_en.pdf

Concluding General Debate, World Leaders Call for Strong Global Action to Resolve Longstanding International Peace, Security Challenges in Middle East, Africa

... **Khalifa Shaheen Almarar, Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates** ... emphasized that stability in the region also requires ending the occupation of all Palestinian and Arab territories. In that regard he commended the Abraham Accords signed by Israel, United Arab Emirates and the United States last year. ...

... we must ensure that the Middle East is a region free of weapons of mass destruction," he continued, drawing attention to Iran's development of nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes. ...

Fayssal Mekdad, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Syria [said] Syria also remains firmly committed to fully recover the occupied Syrian Golan ... adding that Israel must be held accountable for its violations. Calling for an end to Israel's war crimes in the occupied Palestinian territory, he said that Syria holds countries supporting Israel responsible for these acts. ...

Ramtane Lamamra, Minister for Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad of Algeria, ... Deeply concerned about the lack of prospects for a just and final solution to the Palestinian question, he condemned the repressive practices of the Israeli occupation and its denial of international law. He urged the Security Council to assume its responsibilities by allowing the Palestinian people to establish an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

Abdullatif Bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain ... [said] the signing of the declaration in support of peace with Israel would aim to consolidate peace in the region. He called on the international community to find a solution for the Palestinian people by establishing an independent State with East Jerusalem as the capital in accordance with the two-State solution, resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative. ...

Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Bin Hamood Albusaidi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Oman ... reaffirmed Oman's support for the demands of the Palestinians for independence and the establishment of a State with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

Dato Seri Paduka Awang Haji Erywan Bin Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Haji Mohd Yusof, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam ... said continued forced evictions, destruction of homes and settlement expansion by the occupying Power has denied Palestinians their basic human rights and right to self-determination. The Security Council must work towards a comprehensive, lasting peace, based on a two-State solution, he said, also calling on the international community to remain resolutely committed to creation of an independent State of Palestine, based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

Nasser Bourita, Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Living Abroad of Morocco ... Encouraging Israeli-Palestinian parties to resume peace talks and cease all actions that jeopardize negotiations for a two-State solution, he said Morocco's peaceful relations with Israel echo its support for advancing the cause of peace in the region and strengthening regional security. ...

Denis Ronaldo Moncada Colindres, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua ... Underlining full support for the Palestinian people, he called for a two-State solution, including creation of a State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

The representative of Iran said his delegation rejected the baseless allegations against his country that had been made by his counterpart from Israel. As the only occupying Power in the region, Israel has started conflicts for decades, yet its representative did not refer to violations against Palestinians, forced displacements, killings and policies that violate international law. Israel also possesses weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons, destabilizes the region and is blocking the creation of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone. Israel should have no illusions about Iran's commitment to defend itself, an inherent right of all States. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/ga12370.doc.htm>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Re-Energized International Efforts Needed to End Occupation of Palestinian Territory, Attain Two-State Solution, Special Envoy Tells Security Council

... **Tor Wennesland, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General** ... presented the Secretary-General's nineteenth report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). Covering the period from 12 June to 27 September, he noted that no new settlement housing plans were advanced, approved or tendered during that

time. However, demolitions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures continued across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where 970 Palestinians face eviction. Daily violence continued, with 24 Palestinians, including two women and four children, killed by Israeli security forces during demonstrations, clashes, security operations and other incidents. Another 4,674 Palestinians, including nine women and 484 children, were injured. One Israeli soldier was killed by Palestinians and 29 injured, including two women, in clashes and other incidents. In addition, some Palestinian and Israeli officials — including a Knesset member and a senior Hamas official — continued to use inflammatory rhetoric.

The Palestinian Authority continues to face a growing fiscal crisis ... Following a meeting on 30 August between Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz, the first between the two sides since the formation of a new Israeli Government, Israel said it would lend \$150 million to the Palestinian Authority, to be paid through deductions from clearance revenues. The Israeli Government also announced plans to issue identity cards to undocumented foreign nationals in the West Bank and grant an additional 15,000 permits for Palestinian workers to enter Israel, together with an additional 1,000 building permits for Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank. ...

... he emphasized that all settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are illegal under international law and undermine prospects for a viable two-State solution. Israel must cease demolitions and evictions, and approve plans that enable communities to undertake legal construction work. Security forces must exercise maximum restraint ...

The launching of rockets and incendiary devices towards Israeli population centres must stop and the arrests of human rights defenders, journalists and activists on charges that interfere with their right to freedom of expression must cease, he continued. In Gaza, Hamas must cease hindering the delivery of crucial humanitarian assistance. ... Both parties should take urgent steps to stabilize the Palestinian economy and strengthen Palestinian institutions. ...

Mai Farsakh, Planning Manager, Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center, described some of the effects of Israel's blatant disregard for international law on those suffering from its continued settlement expansion into the Palestinian territory. ...

She recalled that, since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), approximately 60,000 additional settlers took up occupancy in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. ... More threatening still are the plans being advanced to retroactively authorize illegal outposts situated on Palestinian private land by declaring the latter "State land". ...

Meredith Rothbart, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Amal-Tikva ... said that the Oslo Accords failed because the agreement came from a secret process between elite leaders, with no women, no religious leaders and no representatives of those wishing to disrupt the process with violence.

Civil society peacebuilding not only works but is a required precondition for a negotiated peace agreement in intractable conflict, she said, adding: "We know it works when a Palestinian police officer saves a lost IDF ... soldier's life, not because he has to, but because he wants to, out of appreciation for the Israeli volunteer from the organization, Road to Recovery who drove his brother to the hospital just the week before...." She also drew attention to religious leaders, like Rabbi Michael Melchior and Sheikh Raed Badir from the Religious Peace Initiative, who prevented a third Intifada amidst violence on the Temple Mount, calling them "the real peace negotiators." The United Nations has passed resolution after resolution, but to build peace between Israelis and Palestinians, the Council must consider investing in a social peace, she urged. ...

Richard M. Mills, Jr. (United States) said that, although present circumstances are difficult and concerning, steps can be taken to improve the lives of the Israeli and Palestinian people while also preserving the possibility of a negotiated two-State solution for "when the time is ripe". He called for regular, predictable and sustained access to Gaza

for humanitarian actors and for crossings to remain open, with regular hours, to normal commercial traffic and expedited transit of humanitarian goods. ...

Ivan P. Khoroshev (Russian Federation), drawing attention to the stagnation in the Middle East peace process and the unresolved nature of the Palestinian question, said dangerous unilateral actions continue including settlement-building, arbitrary arrests, violation of the status of holy sites and violence. ... Urgent humanitarian assistance must be provided to all those in need and the Palestinian Authority should receive assistance in tackling the lingering socioeconomic and humanitarian challenges facing the population, including the COVID-19 pandemic. ...

Nicolas de Rivière (France) said that the two-State solution is the only option that will bring fair and lasting peace to the Middle East while meeting the Palestinians' legitimate aspirations and not compromising Israel's security. He urged the Israeli authorities to stop settlement expansion, freeze demolitions and halt expulsions in East Jerusalem. France will not recognize any changes to the 1967 borders which are not agreed by the parties, ... He also condemned the firing of rockets and incendiary devices into Israel from Gaza and urged Israel to use force with discernment and in line with international law. ...

Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom) [[see above for more detail](#)] welcomed recent engagement between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian leadership ... Expressing concern over Israel's ongoing settlement expansion and the demolition of Palestinian property, she observed that there has been a worrying upward trend in Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces throughout 2021 ...

Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland) ... expressed her country's steadfast view that a two-State solution offers the strongest prospect for sustainable peace. Condemning illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, she also expressed concern over an increase in demolitions, evictions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. ... In addition, acts of violence, including rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, continue to erode trust between the parties, she warned, condemning all acts of terrorism. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14650.doc.htm>

The report referred to above is not yet available online.

TOP

Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Lithuania: Conference Centres

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [51683] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make representations to her Lithuanian counterpart on the proposed construction of the Vilnius National Convention and Conference Centre on Shnipishok cemetery land.

Wendy Morton: The UK Government understands that the Lithuanian government has indefinitely postponed the renovation of the Soviet-era Vilnius Palace of Concerts and Sports, located in the Šnipiškės Jewish cemetery. We are pleased to note the current and previous Lithuanian governments' efforts to work alongside the Jewish Community of Lithuania and the international Jewish community on the issue of this renovation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51683>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

Charities Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

Education (16 to 19 Academies) (Religious Character) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2946>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900>

Nationality and Borders Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

**** Online Safety Bill (Draft)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

Evidence session: Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Sub-Committee

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2788/html/>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942>

Northern Ireland Assembly

Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/organ-and-tissue-donation-deemed-consent-bill/>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes today**

Dispute Resolution in England and Wales (closing date 30 September 2021)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008174/dispute-resolution-call-for-evidence.pdf

**** closes today**

Equality and Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2025

(closing date 30 September 2021)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/our-strategic-plan-2022-2025-have-your-say>

The Scottish Government's international work (closing date 29 October 2021)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/cteea/international-engagement-external-affairs/>

Labelling for Animal Welfare (closing date 6 December 2021)

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-welfare-market-interventions-and-labelling/labelling-for-animal-welfare/>

Proposed Assisted Dying for Terminally ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (closing date 22 December 2021)

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/proposals-for-bills/proposed-assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

TOP

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