



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Hate Crime: Ethnic Groups

**Navendu Mishra (Labour)** [16969] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons her Department did not collect information on the race or ethnicity of victims of hate crime until 2021.

**Victoria Atkins:** We introduced this data requirement following the successful experimental pilot to disaggregate religious hate crime data under the 2016-2020 Hate Crime Action Plan. Each new data requirement needs close engagement with forces to ensure data recording is accurate and consistent.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-16/16969>

#### Hate Crime

**Navendu Mishra (Labour)** [16970] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to raise awareness of hate crime and encourage reporting in addition to the Hate Crime Action Plan, published in 2016, and the 2018 Refresh.

**Eddie Hughes:** The Government is now considering a range of options to tackle hate crime beyond the current action plan. We will work with other departments and civil society partners to explore possible approaches, and to ensure a range of views from communities are taken into consideration.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-16/16970>

*The action plans referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/927673/2016\\_Hate\\_Crime\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927673/2016_Hate_Crime_Action_Plan.pdf)

and

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/748175/Hate\\_crime\\_refresh\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_WEB.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF)

## Religious Hatred: Hinduism

**Navendu Mishra (Labour)** [16971] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans the Government has to renew its strategy on hinduphobia; and which stakeholders the Government plans to engage as part of that process.

**Eddie Hughes:** The Hate Crime action plan (2016) and the Hate Crime action plan Refresh (2018) set out the Government's plans to tackle hatred directed at anyone for their race, sexuality, disability, gender identity or religion, including that of the Hindu community.

The Government is now considering a range of options to tackle hate crime beyond the 2018 plan. We will work with other departments and civil society partners to explore possible approaches, and to ensure a range of views from communities are taken into consideration.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-16/16971>

*The action plans referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/927673/2016\\_Hate\\_Crime\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927673/2016_Hate_Crime_Action_Plan.pdf)

*and*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/748175/Hate\\_crime\\_refresh\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_WEB.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF)

## National Association of Teachers of Religious Education: Textbooks

**Julian Lewis (Conservative)** [16780] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of whether the recent teaching materials issued to primary schools by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education is in breach of the prohibition on political propaganda in the classroom; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:** The law is clear that schools must remain politically impartial. Head teachers and staff have a responsibility to ensure that they act appropriately, particularly in the political views they express. When political issues are discussed, schools must offer pupils a balanced presentation of opposing views and should not present materials in a politically biased or one sided way.

Schools should not teach contested theory or opinions as fact and must ensure they uphold their duties with regard to political impartiality. Schools should be mindful of the need to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views as well as the age appropriateness of teaching, given that balanced treatment of such issues may not be possible with younger pupils.

Political impartiality in our education system is an important principle to uphold. The Department is developing further guidance to support schools to understand and meet their duties in this area.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-16/16780>

*The teaching materials referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/anti-racist-re/primary-classroom-resources/>

## Online Worship

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [17737] To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what assessment the Church has made of the impact on church attendance of online worship.

**Andrew Selous:** Though it is too early to assess the full impact of online worship, thousands of clergy have been provided with training to use new technology to enable them to produce virtual services. The majority of parishes have also offered some form of online worship live-streaming or bespoke recordings of worship and prayers

One specific advantage of online services has been the ability to broadcast weddings and funerals online. This has enabled family and friends to join in from across the world who may have been prevented from travelling.

The decision on whether to continue with some form of online resource alongside in-person worship will be taken at a parish level, taking into account the local community and accessibility needs.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-17/17737>

## Cabinet Office, and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

**Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to safely plan a wedding or civil partnership, or funeral, wake or commemoration**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-safely-plan-a-wedding-or-civil-partnership-or-funeral-wake-or-commemoration>

## Welsh Government

**Guidance on reopening places of worship: coronavirus**

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

**Updated guidance for weddings and civil partnerships: receptions and celebration events**

<https://gov.wales/guidance-weddings-and-civil-partnerships-receptions-and-celebration-events-html>

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### Israel: Politics and Government

**Lord Jones of Cheltenham (Liberal Democrat)** [HL771] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 3 June (HL275), what assessment they have made of the formation of a new unity government in Israel; and what assessment they have made of the implications of such a development for the possibility of UK recognition of Palestine as a sovereign nation.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We look forward to maintaining excellent relations with the new Israeli government, when formed, and working closely together. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners to strongly advocate for a two-state solution and encourage a return to meaningful negotiations between both parties.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/hl771>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-17/hl275>

### Israel: Overseas Aid

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL765]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the Overseas Development Assistance budget supports the security of Israel; and what consideration they have given to requiring the government of Israel to comply with international law as a criteria for receiving any such aid.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Israel is not eligible for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) as per the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines. The UK therefore provides no ODA to Israel.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/hl765>

### Palestinians: Recognition of States

**Lord Stone of Blackheath (Non-affiliated) [HL820]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the case for recognising Palestine as a State, (2) the benefits for the peace process of the government of Israel negotiating with a Palestinian state instead of different factions, and (3) the effectiveness of international aid for Gaza being directed to a Palestinian state rather than to factions.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners to strongly advocate for a two-state solution and encourage a return to meaningful negotiations between both parties.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/hl820>

### Palestinians: Recognition of States

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL763]** To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 2 June (HL351), what are the necessary criteria to meet their condition that they will recognise Palestine as a state when it "best serves the objective of peace" to do so.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Any decision to recognise a Palestinian state will rest on an assessment of the prospects for peace, and what best supports progress towards a two-state solution.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/hl763>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-18/hl351>

### Jerusalem: Palestinians

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL764]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to protect Palestinians living in Sheik Jarrah from acts of violence reportedly perpetrated by Israeli forces.

**Reply from Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** On 8 May Minister Cleverly publicly expressed concern over tensions in Jerusalem linked to the threatened eviction of Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah. We continue to urge Israel to cease such actions permanently. UK Officials at the British Embassy in Tel Aviv continue to raise the issue regularly with the Israeli Authorities.

The UK also continues to urge the Israeli Government to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of peaceful, legal protestors. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we continue to urge Israel to ensure that its investigations are transparent, swift and comprehensive. 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/2021-06-07/hl764>

The Minister's comments referred to above can be read at <https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1391028309618839557>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL766]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proportionality of the government of Israel's recent military actions in Gaza.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life. All countries, including Israel, have a legitimate right to self-defence, and the right to defend their citizens from attack. In doing so, it is vital that all actions are proportionate, in line with International Humanitarian Law, and make every effort to avoid civilian casualties.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/hl766>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Debbie Abrahams (Labour) [218] Israel and Palestine** – That this House expresses its profound concern at recent events in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel; welcomes the ceasefire which began on 21 May 2021; calls for every effort to be made to end all attacks and forms of aggression, address the underlying causes and hold those responsible fully accountable; recognises that genuine calm and de-escalation can only be achieved with the full realisation of Palestinian rights and the end of Israel's systematic discrimination against Palestinians in Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territory; and calls on the UK Government to work to end the 54 years of occupation and 14 years of the blockade of the Gaza Strip, lift the blockade of Gaza and allow the free flow of goods both way and ensure the tunnels under the Gaza-Egyptian border are closed off permanently with international monitoring, strengthen support for UNRWA and work with international partners to put it on a sustainable long-term financial footing to ensure the dignity of Palestinian refugees until such a time as a just and sustainable solution is achieved, work to ensure the holding of free and fair Presidential and Parliamentary Palestinian elections throughout the occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem, end Israel's systematic discrimination against Palestinians including its own Palestinian citizens, ensuring all mob attacks are fully investigated and use every diplomatic method to bring about a peace process that can resolve this conflict on the basis of international law, justice and the end of all discrimination to ensure a secure and lasting peace.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58664>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### UN World Conference against Racism

**Patrick Grady (SNP) [16875]** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to announce a decision on the Government's participation in the planned one-day high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

**Nigel Adams:** The United Kingdom is committed to combatting all forms of racism,

including antisemitism, both at home and abroad. We believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle injustices and advocate respect among different religious and racial groups is to encourage all states to uphold their human rights obligations. Following historic concerns regarding antisemitism, the UK has decided not to attend the UN's Durban Conference anniversary event, later this year.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-16/16875>

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

### **UK to not attend the UN's Durban Conference anniversary event 2021**

An FCDO spokesperson said: Following historic concerns regarding antisemitism, the UK has decided not to attend the UN's Durban Conference anniversary event, later this year.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-not-attend-the-uns-durban-conference-anniversary-event-2021-fcdo-statement>

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## **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 (Assemblies) Bill**

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

#### **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

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

#### **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

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

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

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

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 8 days**

**Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS)** (closing date 30 June 2021)

<https://evensurvey.co.uk/>

**\*\* closes in 10 days**

**Protect Duty** (closing date 2 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protect-duty>

**Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU** (closing date 5 July 2021)

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13068-Strategy-on-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-Jewish-life-in-the-EU\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13068-Strategy-on-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-Jewish-life-in-the-EU_en)

**Curriculum for Wales Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) guidance** (closing date 16 July 2021)

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-05/consultation-document-curriculum-for-wales-religion-values-and-ethics-guidance.pdf>

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