



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Debate

#### Tributes to Sir David Amess

*col 553* **The Prime Minister (Boris Johnson):** ... The passing of 72 hours has done little to numb the shock and sadness we all felt when we heard of the tragic and senseless death of Sir David Amess. ...

*col 554* Sir David was taken from us in a contemptible act of violence, striking at the core of what it is to be a Member of this House, and violating the sanctity both of the church in which he was killed and the constituency surgery that is so essential to our representative democracy. But we will not allow the manner of Sir David's death in any way to detract from his accomplishments as a politician or as a human being. Sir David was a patriot who believed passionately in this country, in its people, in its future. He was also one of the nicest, kindest and most gentle individuals ever to grace these Benches; a man who used his decades of experience to offer friendship and support to new Members of all parties, whose views often confounded expectation and defied easy stereotype, and who believed not just in pointing out what was wrong with society but in getting on and doing something about it. ...

*col 556* **Keir Starmer (Labour):** ... It is too early for us to comment on the exact motivations and circumstances of David's killing, but I want to finish by saying this: a cowardly attack on a public servant doing his job is an attack on our country and on our way of life—a way of life that prizes tolerance, democracy and respect, that accepts our differences but cherishes our commonalities, that refuses to succumb to the poison of extremism. No matter what perverted cause, faith or ideology these attackers support, their intention is always the same: to sow division among us. That is why our response must always be to show that we will never be cowed, that our bonds to one another can never be eroded, that the hatred that took Sir David's life will never win. ...

*col 557* **Mark Francois (Conservative):** ... All of us, wherever we come from, came here to try to help people. We may disagree, sometimes passionately, about how best to help people, but surely we could all agree that we came here to try. For this, we are now systematically vilified day after day, and I simply say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that

enough is enough. We all have one thing in common: we are legislators. So I humbly suggest that we get on and do some legislating. I suggest that if we want to ensure that our colleague did not die in vain, we all collectively pick up the baton, regardless of party, and take the forthcoming Online Safety Bill and toughen it up markedly. If I may be so presumptuous, let us put “David’s law” on to the statute book, the essence of which would be that, while people in public life must remain open to legitimate criticism, they could no longer be vilified or their families subjected to the most horrendous abuse, especially from people who hide behind a cloak of anonymity, with the connivance of the social media companies for profit. ...

Let us also do that for all our councillors, who are sick and tired of reading on Facebook after every planning committee meeting the night before, that “it must have been a brown envelope job”. Let us do it for all those other people who hold surgeries, including our GPs who have carried on tending to the sick throughout the pandemic but who are now being vilified online, along with their loyal receptionists and staff, just for trying to do their job. If the social media companies do not want to help us to drain the Twitter swamp, let us compel them to do it by law, because they have had more than enough chances to do it voluntarily. ...

**col 564 Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** ... We have learned to stand with the Irish and the Northern Irish against violence. We stand with Muslims against Islamophobia, with Jews against anti-Semitism and with all the targets of fascists and white supremacists. We do have to be vigilant, but we also have to continue to be diligent in contact with constituents. Of course, we must review security risks, including the insecure location of the national holocaust memorial presently proposed in Victoria Tower Gardens.

At the opening of the Imperial War Museum’s holocaust galleries last week, I collected posters. David might wish us to remember their words, as if directed to us and to our constituents. “Freedom is in peril. Defend it with all your might.” ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-18/debates/909B6ABE-3B61-41E1-9B9A-BA218A939EBC/TributesToSirDavidAmess>

## House of Lords Debate

### Tributes: Sir David Amess MP

**col 24 The Archbishop of York:** ... I want to say this: hate cannot win. It may score many points and land many punches, but it cannot win, because, trusting no one, hate just ends up with endless divisions and suspicions, and, in the end, it just consumes itself. Sorry—I am going to go into sermon mode just for a moment, sisters and brothers. Love is always stronger; it is always more tenacious; its patient endurance draws us together. By love, I mean not just warm feelings of well-disposed good will but that deeply committed determination to get up each morning and live what you believe in, put the needs of others before yourself and recognise our common humanity. That is where the word “kindness” comes from: it is linked to the word “kin”. It means that we belong to each other; we serve the common good; we know that our best interests are absolutely interwoven with those of others, and they lead to those things, those values and that vision, that are worth living for. ...

**col 29 Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench):** ... I first met David when he came into the House in 1983. From across the House, we joined forces in taking up the case of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Jewish lives from the Nazis. In 1997, thanks to David’s assiduous campaign, a statue was erected to Wallenberg outside the Western Marble Arch Synagogue. There were other campaigns, about Soviet Jewry and the plight of Alexander Ogorodnikov, a Russian Orthodox dissident. We

frequently shared platforms to highlight the persecution of people because of their religion or belief or human rights violations, especially—as we have heard from others—the situation in Iran. ...

**col/ 34 Lord Blencathra (Conservative):** ... I say this carefully: I think that David died a Christian martyr. I mean “martyr” in the proper Greek derivation of the term meaning a witness and nothing else. He died a witness to his belief in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and to their practical realisation, including in working for others until the very end. He did his duty to his God, his family, his constituency and his country. ...

**col/ 36 Lord Moynihan (Conservative):** ... His sensitivity and determination to help rehouse the 13 unaccompanied Afghan children with British family connections; his strong Catholic faith; his work as a strong supporter of Israel, yet always welcomed and respected in so many Arab countries; his ability to bring together and unite members of many a parliamentary delegation; and the quips and asides that always raised a smile, were there for all to see. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-10-18/debates/74AD7F2A-B909-45E2-821B-389C8609958C/TributesSirDavidAmessMP>

## House of Commons Written Answer

### Hamas

**Christian Wakeford (Conservative) [903772]** What recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Government's proscription of Hamas.

**Damian Hinds:** Hamas' military wing was proscribed in the UK in 2001.

Proscription is a powerful tool. The investigation and prosecution of proscription offences is a matter for the police and Crown Prosecution Service.

It would be inappropriate for the Government to comment further on such matters however, anyone that professes support for, or who is a member of Hamas, risks being investigated by the police for proscription offences.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/903772>

## Department of Health and Social Care and UK Health Security Agency

**Coronavirus (COVID-19): Updated guidance for funerals and commemorative events during the coronavirus pandemic**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

## Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

**Institutional responses to allegations of child sexual abuse involving the late Lord Janner of Braunstone QC**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1026632/Janner\\_Investigation\\_Report\\_Open\\_Artwork\\_Web\\_Accessible\\_1\\_3\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1026632/Janner_Investigation_Report_Open_Artwork_Web_Accessible_1_3_.pdf)

TOP

## Israel

**See also House of Commons written answer 903772 “ Hamas ” in the Home Affairs section above.**

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Palestinians: Elections**

**Julie Elliott (Labour)** [53893] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations she has made to the (a) Palestinian Authority and (b) Israeli Authorities on the urgent need for elections to renew the democratic mandate of the Presidency and the Parliament.

**James Cleverly:** We are disappointed that elections in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have been postponed. The Palestinian people should be allowed to enjoy their democratic rights - and Israel must allow voting for Palestinians in East Jerusalem, in line with the Oslo Accords. We urge further work towards genuine and democratic national elections for all Palestinians, which is crucial to the establishment of a viable and sovereign Palestinian State.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-23/53893>

#### **Palestinians: Prisoners**

**Kim Johnson (Labour)** [54031] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Israeli government on removing the ban on family visits to Palestinian prisoners.

**James Cleverly:** 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, including the treatment of Palestinian prisoners. We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to prison conditions and detention practices, including access to family visits.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-23/54031>

#### **Palestinians: Prisoners**

**Kim Johnson (Labour)** [54032] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many times UK diplomats have visited Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention in 2021.

**James Cleverly:** The British Embassy in Tel Aviv has a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation and regularly attend military court hearings. We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to prison conditions and detention practices.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-23/54032>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Mohammad Munir Tamimi**

**Stephen Timms (Labour)** [52402] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will seek assurances from the Israeli authorities that a criminal investigation into the fatal shooting of 17 year old Mohammad Munir Mohammad Tamimi will be held.

#### **Omar Hasan Abu al-Nil**

**Stephen Timms (Labour)** [52403] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will seek assurances from the Israeli authorities that a criminal investigation into the fatal shooting of 13 year old Omar Hasan Mousa Abu Al-Nil will be held.

**James Cleverly:** We are aware of the reports surrounding the deaths of

Mohammad Munir Mohammad Tamimi and Omar Hasan Mousa Abu Al-Nil. 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, in particular the need to protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-21/52402>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-21/52403>

## United Nations

### **Access to Natural Resources by Palestinians, Syrians Should Not Be Denied, Delegates Tell Second Committee**

... **Tarik Alami, Director of the Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**, introduced the Secretary-General's report on "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources" ... He noted that Israel continues to consolidate its control over the Occupied Palestinian Territory, hampering development and exacerbating living conditions, despite ongoing hardships due to the COVID-19 crisis. Its discriminatory policies and practices include zoning policies preventing construction, excessive use of force, arrest and arbitrary detention of thousands of Palestinians, and documented cases of torture.

Israeli policies have disrupted livelihoods and continue to deprive Palestinians of access to their natural resources, he said. While Israeli settlements have high-quality water, only 10 per cent have access to this vital resource in Gaza. Some 2.45 million Palestinians need humanitarian assistance, he said, a need exacerbated by the pandemic and decline of international funding. After three years of GDP decline, it fell to its lowest level in 2020, with 26 per cent unemployed and 1.4 million in Gaza suffering from food insecurity and malnutrition. Adding that the occupation of the Syrian Golan violates international law, he said the population there are suffering from discriminatory policies designed to benefit Israeli settlers. ...

**The representative of Guinea, speaking on behalf of the "Group of 77"** developing countries and China, said ... that his bloc deplores the detrimental impact of Israeli settlements on Palestinian and other Arab natural resources, especially the impact of confiscated land and the forced diversion of water resources, including the destruction of orchards and crops and the seizure of water wells by Israeli settlers. It also deplores the continuing de-development of the Gaza Strip and the dire humanitarian crisis. ... He reiterated the call on Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and immediately and completely cease all policies and measures meant to alter the character and status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. ...

**The observer for the State of Palestine** ... said the report presents the cruel reality and continuing injustice that his people have been enduring for more than 54 years of the illegal occupation. The repeated military aggression has undermined all aspects of life for Gaza's 2 million inhabitants who are dealing with widespread food insecurity, collapse of essential services and a crippled health-care system. COVID-19 has created a crisis within a crisis, compounding the already dire socioeconomic situation of Palestinians.

He said Israel's systematic operation masks the land exploitation, settlement expansion and persecution. It is imperative to bring Israel's occupation to an end and enable Palestinians to exercise their inalienable rights. In that regard, urgent and decisive

international action should include imposition of an arms embargo on the occupying Power; supporting the International Criminal Court in its examination of the situation; and prosecuting perpetrators of crime through travel bans and the imposition of diplomatic and economic sanctions until the occupying Power abides by the law. He called on all States to extinguish their dealings with the occupying Power in line with the Security Council resolution. ...

**The representative of Syria** ... said Israel carries out illegal practices and contradicts relevant Assembly resolutions. He criticized an Israeli energy plan to construct huge air turbines that is seizing agricultural land owned by Syrian citizens. ... There are discriminatory policies against Syrians in the Occupied Syrian Golan. The Israelis are applying pressure to residents of Syrian villages to hand over the deeds to their lands, lands that have been in their families for generations. Syria condemns Israeli practices that include the looting of resources. All countries should have access to their natural resources. He called on the Israeli Government to end its occupation of the Syrian Golan. ...

**The representative of the United Arab Emirates**, noting that escalation of tensions must be avoided on Palestinian land, said there is a need to launch and maintain a ceasefire as agreed upon in May. It is necessary to stop all unlawful and illegal practices in Palestine, which constitute violations of international law and Security Council resolutions. She called on the international community to exert utmost efforts to relaunch the peace process and commended the regional efforts in that regard. Stressing that the only solution is the two-State solution that establishes an independent Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, she reaffirmed commitment to work with regional and international partners to end the conflict in the Middle East. ...

**The representative of South Africa** noted ... that security and stability in the Middle East is being undermined by the continued occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories and the aggressive actions of the Israeli regime, she called on the Security Council to fulfil due responsibility. The protracted occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan has had a detrimental effect on the lives of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories ...

**The representative of Iran** ... [said] These unlawful practices include continued violence, arbitrary detention and ill-treatment, destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure, illegal settlement activities, coercive population displacement, the killing of civilians and deprivation of access to natural resources. ... The illegal blockade undermines the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinians. ... Stressing that the Golan is an integral part of Syria, he condemned in the strongest possible terms all measures taken by the illegitimate occupying regime to undermine that country's territorial integrity. ...

**The representative of Bahrain** said the report shows how the pandemic has affected the economy of Palestine. ... Peace is a strategic option to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region. Tolerance should be the norm to combat violence and hatred. It is necessary to secure a comprehensive and just solution for the Palestinian people. A just solution would include an independent State along the lines of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/gaef3557.doc.htm>

**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/76/94)**

<https://undocs.org/en/A/76/94>

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>

#### **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

**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>

**Animal Welfare – revision of EU legislation (Food Safety)** (closing date 21 January 2022)

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation/public-consultation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation/public-consultation_en)

**Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan 2022-2025**

(closing date not stated)

<https://nihrc.org/news/detail/we-want-to-hear-from-you-about-our-strategic-planning-2022-2025>

[TOP](#)

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