



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Religious Buildings: Closures

Ruth Jones (Labour) [61216] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to protect (a) Bevis Marks Synagogue in the City of London and (b) other places of worship from closure.

Kemi Badenoch: Whilst I cannot comment specifically on Bevis Marks Synagogue, due to the Secretary of State's quasi-judicial role in the planning system, the Government recognises the financial difficulties that many places of worship have faced in the last 19 months. To respond to the impact of Covid-19, we have available a package of support specifically for charities and businesses. Places of worship and faith groups that are also registered charities have been able to apply to a number of those schemes. This included the Government's £750 million package of support specifically for voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-22/61216>

Welsh Senedd Written Answer

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-semitism

Natasha Asghar (Conservative) [WQ83607] How many local authorities in Wales have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of anti-semitism?

Minister for Social Justice: I would like to confirm that the Welsh Government has endorsed the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism. Adoption of the definition is a matter for individual local authorities in Wales and that information is not held by the Welsh Government.

<https://record.senedd.wales/WrittenQuestion/83607>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [63858] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent representations she has made to her Israeli counterpart on the potential forced evictions faced by Palestinian families in the Karm Al Jaouni area of Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem.

James Cleverly: The UK regularly raises the issue of demolitions and forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes with the Government of Israel, most recently with Israel's Ministry of Defense on 19 October. The former Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to avoid actions which make peace more difficult to achieve.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-26/63858>

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [63859] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the accuracy of reports that on 11 August 2021, a one-storey building was demolished by its owners, displacing four families in the Shu'fat neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, following a ruling by the Israeli High Court.

James Cleverly: We are aware of these reports. Demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians, call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution, and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, demolitions by an occupying power are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. We continue to urge the Government of Israel to avoid actions which make peace more difficult to achieve.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-26/63859>

Hamas

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [62642] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how her Department defines the distinction between the military wing and the political wing of Hamas.

James Cleverly: Hamas' military wing has been proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the UK since 2001 and the UK maintains a no contact policy with Hamas in its entirety.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/62642>

House of Lords Written Answers

Jerusalem: Housing

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL3184] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the renewal of a plan to construct a new settlement of up to 2,600 housing units in East Jerusalem.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Minister of State for Middle East and North Africa urged the Government of Israel to reverse their decision to advance the construction of settlement units in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem on 28 October. The former Foreign Secretary also raised ongoing evictions,

demolitions and settlement activity, including in East Jerusalem, with the Israeli authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. The UK regularly calls on Israel to end illegal settlement expansion in the West Bank and closely monitors reports of further settlement advancements. 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 continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to avoid actions which make peace more difficult to achieve.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3184>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL3183] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding an attack by Israeli settlers on Palestinian homes in Khirbet al-Mufaqarah on 28 September.

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, and urge restraint in the use of live fire.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3183>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL3185] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the killing of a sixteen-year-old Palestinian in Beit Jala on 14 October.

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/2021-10-18/hl3185>

West Bank: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3168] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect Palestinians' access to water in the West Bank.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has raised the issue of access to water in the Occupied Palestinian Territories with the Israeli authorities, including stressing the urgent need for Israel to take immediate and practical measures to improve the current situation and ensure fair distribution of water in the West Bank.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3168>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3167] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding reported failures by the Israeli army to report the use of firearms by settlers against unarmed Palestinians.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to raise with Israeli counterparts our concerns about Israeli settler violence, and continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian

population. We urge the Israeli authorities to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3167>

Hebron: Demonstrations

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3170] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Israeli soldiers injured several nonviolent protesters and journalists south of Hebron on 17 September.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of these reports. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of the Israel security force's adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. The wounded or critically ill should be able to access the urgent medical care they need.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3170>

Palestinians: Detainees

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3169] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Detainees and Ex-Detainees' Affairs Commission findings of 15 September that two thirds of the Palestinian detainees in the Etzion settlement bloc in Bethlehem are minors.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of this report. 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 children. 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.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/hl3169>

The report referred to above is not currently available online.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

James Cleverly Great to talk to Israel's Energy Minister @KElharrar at @COP26 this morning about green energy generation and using technology to wean the world off hydrocarbons.

<https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1455479784352501762>

COP26

COP26 Regarding Minister Elharrar's experience at the entry point yesterday, this was a genuine mistake and we have apologised for that. We are pleased to see her in attendance at COP26 today. #COP26 must be inclusive and accessible to all and the venue is designed to facilitate that.

<https://twitter.com/COP26/status/1455505591032496132>

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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>

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/>

Extension of Committee Stage

<http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2021/11/01&docID=354734#3710657>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

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

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>

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