



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme**

**Carla Lockhart (DUP)** [74009] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been received by the places of worship protective security funding scheme, by region of the UK in each of the last three years.

**Carla Lockhart (DUP)** [74010] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been received by the places of worship protective security funding scheme, by the religious faith of the applicant organisation in each of the last three years.

**Damian Hinds:** The Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme is available in England and Wales. Applications to the 2021/2022 round closed on 16<sup>th</sup> July. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in due course.

Over the last three years, which includes the 2018/2019, 2019/2020, and 2020/2021 rounds, we have received 707 eligible applications in total.

In the 2018/2019 round, we received 88 eligible applications. This can be broken down as 46 Muslim applications, 18 Christian applications, 6 Hindu applications, and 18 Sikh applications.

In the 2019/2020 round, we received 376 eligible applications. This can be broken down as 208 Muslim applications, 106 Christian applications, 29 Hindu applications, 30 Sikh applications, and 3 applications from other faiths, such as Buddhism, Jain, or Multi-faith.

In the 2020/2021 round we received 243 eligible applications. This can be broken down as 89 Muslim applications, 103 Christian applications, 22 Hindu applications, 21 Sikh applications, and 8 applications from other faiths.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-12/74009>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-12/74010>

## House of Lords Written Answer

### David Amess

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL3882]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to convene a meeting between the College of Policing and religious leaders following the murder of Sir David Amess MP.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Following the murder of Sir David Amess MP, the College of Policing and police leaders have welcomed engagement with faith, community leaders or others who have concerns about guidance for police officers related to the preservation and security of crime scenes, to understand their views and consider possible next steps on this issue.

The Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Metropolitan Police Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick established a joint group to consider whether any changes are required to the guidance issued to officers faced with questions of access to crime scenes related to traumatic violence.

The joint group has begun its work, led by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for homicide investigation, Metropolitan Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stuart Cundy, and involving representatives from the Catholic Church, the College of Policing and relevant policing leads.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-09/hl3882>

## House of Commons Library

**Freedom of religion or belief: 40th anniversary of the declaration on the elimination of religious intolerance**

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2021-0201/>

## 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>

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### Jerusalem: Palestinians

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3883]** To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to the government of Israel about the future status of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, following the Supreme Court of Israel ruling that Palestinians living there will have "protected tenant" status for no more than two further generations.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Supreme Court 'protected tenant' proposal relates to an eviction case against four families resident in Sheikh Jarrah. We

remain opposed to the eviction of Palestinians from their homes, and regularly make clear our concerns to the Israeli authorities and the Municipality of Jerusalem, both bilaterally and in co-operation with like-minded diplomatic partners. The Fourth Geneva Convention, which applies to all occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, prohibits demolitions or forced evictions absent military necessity. Our position on the status of Jerusalem has not changed: it should be determined in a negotiated settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and should ultimately be the shared capital of the Israeli and Palestinian states.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-09/hl3883>

## Downing Street

### **PM meeting with Israeli President Isaac Herzog**

The Prime Minister met Israel's President Isaac Herzog ... for discussions on strengthening our bilateral relationship across a range of areas.

The leaders welcomed the recent cooperation on tackling COVID-19 and stressed their commitment to boosting ties in security, trade and technology, including by moving forward with an enhanced free trade deal.

The Prime Minister noted positively the recent agreement between Israel and Jordan to provide solar power and clean water, and they discussed opportunities to cooperate on green, sustainable infrastructure following COP26.

On regional stability, the Prime Minister welcomed the recent normalisation agreements with a number of Middle East states, and reiterated the UK's commitment to Israel's security and to the stability and prosperity of the region.

He also reaffirmed the government's absolute commitment to tackling antisemitism in the UK and internationally, as they looked ahead to Hannukah celebrations next week.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-meeting-with-israeli-president-isaac-herzog-23-november-2021>

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

### **Human rights priority countries: ministerial statement for January to June 2021**

In July 2021, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) published the 2020 Annual Human Rights and Democracy Report. The report provided an assessment of the global human rights situation, and set out the UK Government's thematic, consular, and programme work to advance human rights throughout the world. It focused on 31 countries where we are particularly concerned about human rights issues, and where we consider that the UK can make a real difference.

This statement provides an updated assessment of the 31 priority countries from 1 January to 30 June 2021.

The 31 Human Rights Priority Countries are: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. ...

The human rights situation in Israel and the OPTs remains concerning. In Gaza, the situation deteriorated, with a significant escalation of violence between Gazan militant groups and Israel. Between 10 and 21 May 2021, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group launched 4,360 rockets in to Israel. This resulted in the death of 12 civilians including one child and one soldier in Israel, with 330 others injured. The Israeli Defence Forces

carried out a campaign of airstrikes, naval and land bombardment in Gaza. 256 civilian Palestinians were killed, including 66 children. Access to Gaza, already limited, was heavily curtailed during and following the escalation affecting humanitarian aid, food supplies and medical treatment. The humanitarian situation in Gaza remained dire and Hamas authorities continued to repress Gazans' civil and political rights.

In the West Bank, Israeli settlement activity continued. Rates of Israeli demolitions of Palestinian property in East Jerusalem and Area C increased. Incidents of concern included the repeated mass demolition of the Palestinian community of Humsa al Bqai'a in February, leaving civilians homeless. The threat of evictions of Palestinians from their homes in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah in particular, resulted in frequent clashes. According to UNOCHA, about 970 Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem were the subject of eviction cases. Settler violence worsened, with OCHA recording the highest monthly average of incidents since it began tracking settler violence with over 45 attacks resulting in Palestinian casualties or damage to property. Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces were accused of excessive use of force after the death of activist Nizar Banat in custody on 24 June. Protests subsequently took place across the West Bank, resulting in the harassment of peaceful protesters, journalists and human rights defenders, with women activists specifically targeted. Concerns also remained over use of excessive force by Israeli Security Forces. During the first 6 months of 2021, 49 Palestinians were killed (including 9 children), and 9,668 injured by Israeli forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. ...

**To read the full statement see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-priority-countries-autumn-2021-ministerial-statement/human-rights-priority-countries-ministerial-statement-for-january-to-june-2021>

*The 2020 Annual Human Rights and Democracy Report, referred to above, can be read at* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-and-democracy-report-2020/human-rights-and-democracy-2020-foreign-commonwealth-development-office-report>

**Updated Foreign Travel Advice: Israel**

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel>

**Updated Foreign Travel Advice: Occupied Palestinian Territories**

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

## Department for International Trade

**Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Israel**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1034852/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2021-11-24.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1034852/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2021-11-24.pdf)

**Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1034911/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2021-11-24.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1034911/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2021-11-24.pdf)

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## Foreign Affairs

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

#### **UK to host international conference to promote freedom of religion or belief next summer in London**

... The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office will host a global summit to promote freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) next summer (Tuesday 5 July – Wednesday 6 July) in London.

The Summit will drive collective action in promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities around the world so that everyone, everywhere can practise their own religion or belief freely. It will play a key role in shaping the network of liberty the UK, as a fierce champion of freedom, is building around the world.

Promoting FoRB for all is one of the UK's long-standing human rights priorities and is a key pillar of the Integrated Review of security, defence, development and foreign policy. ... Throughout 2021, the UK has made great strides with our international partners in collective efforts to stamp out intolerance and persecution relating to religious and non-religious beliefs. In May, under our G7 presidency, the UK secured – for the very first time - the inclusion of FoRB issues in the communique the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said: I want all people, everywhere, to be free from discrimination and persecution regardless of their opinions and beliefs. We have used our G7 Presidency this year to defend and advance these fundamental freedoms and will build on that next year when we host friends and partners from across the world.

FCDO Minister Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon said: I warmly welcome that the UK will be hosting an international conference on freedom of religion or belief next summer in our vibrant capital, London.

The UK continues to take any form of human rights abuses and violations extremely seriously, which is why we are laying the foundations for further global action to protect and promote freedom of religion or belief for all.

International collaboration is the only way to bring about real change.

Fiona Bruce MP, UK Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) said: ... The conference will be a pivotal opportunity to engage with our international partners to ensure that the rights of all individuals, regardless of their religion or belief, are fully protected and respected, no matter where they are in the world, without fear of prejudice or persecution. ...

***To read the full press release see***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-host-international-conference-to-promote-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-next-summer-in-london>

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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/>

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

**Marriage Law (Northern Ireland)** (closing date 18 February 2022)  
<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-marriage-law>

**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