



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Lords Written Answer

Public Order Offences: Religious Buildings

Baroness Hooper (Conservative) [HL5361] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential impact on religious gatherings of the provisions relating to public order offences in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: A policy equality statement for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill was published in September 2021 which covers the public order measures introduced in the Bill. This can be found on GOV.UK.

The public order measures in the Bill will improve the police's ability to manage highly-disruptive protests, enable the police to balance the rights of protesters and the rights of others to go about their daily business, and to dedicate their resources to keeping the public safe.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-12/hl5361>

The policy equality statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-equality-statements/home-office-measures-in-the-police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-equalities-impact-assessment>

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

COVID-19: Updated guidance for the safe use of places of worship

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship>

Department of Health and Social Care and UK Health Security Agency

Updated guidance: COVID-19: arranging or attending a funeral or commemorative event

<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>

Scottish Government

Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe use of places of worship

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-places-of-worship/>

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Holocaust

House of Commons Oral Answer

Prime Minister's Questions

Ian Blackford (SNP): ... I am sure that you and the entire House will want to commemorate tomorrow Holocaust Memorial Day, when we remember the 6 million Jews who lost their lives at the hands of the regime of Hitler, and of course, we remember other genocides, not least more recently in Bosnia—we all pray for continued peace in that country. ...

The Prime Minister: I want to join the right hon. Gentleman and echo his sentiments about Holocaust Memorial Day, where I think he is completely right. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk//commons/2022-01-26/debates/5F56399B-B223-408A-A8EC-1BA001B62E4A/Engagements#contribution-34D0B867-79B5-4E44-B18E-6A0DC44DB9CD>

Downing Street

Boris Johnson: This #HolocaustMemorialDay, it was a privilege to hear the testimony of Manfred Goldberg BEM, who survived concentration camps in Poland and Lithuania. We must conserve memories of the Holocaust so that future generations grasp them with the same shock and immediacy.

<https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1486639054754045952>

Boris Johnson: We must also banish any complacency: It is not enough to just remember. We must make sure that every day, in everything we do, we take action to stamp out prejudice and antisemitism in this country.

<https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1486639828661854209>

UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Holocaust Memorial Day Message 2022

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Holocaust Memorial Day Message 2022

On 27 January 2000, world leaders came together in Stockholm and declared this one day

to be Holocaust Memorial Day.

Holocaust Memorial Day matters to all of us. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities supports the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust to commemorate this day each year, across the whole of the United Kingdom.

It is a day when we remember the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered during the unique evil of the Holocaust. And we pledge to fight antisemitism with renewed vigour.

It is a day when we remember the Roma, the disabled, gay men and political prisoners - all victims of the Nazi regime.

It is a day when we remember those murdered in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. It is a day when we recognise the miracle of survival and listen to voices lamenting tragic loss.

It is a day when we imagine a world free from genocide; a world which has fully recognised where hatred and intolerance, prejudice, and antisemitism can lead.

It is a day when we light our candles, not only to remember but to continue to drive out darkness and brighten the futures we build for our families, our neighbours, our communities, and our world.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/holocaust-memorial-day-message-2022>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

UK to make all its Holocaust records available for research and study

The UK government is to make all its records related to the Holocaust available to the public for the first time, for research and study purposes ...

This includes the collection of 787 books in the St. Lambrecht collection, once looted by the Nazis, which will be accessible to the public for the first time.

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) plans to move them to London's Wiener Holocaust Library, subject to legal agreement.

In addition, the governments of Guernsey and Jersey have committed to making their Holocaust records publicly available as well.

The UK government is now urging others, throughout the world, in possession of collections of Holocaust-related material/records to adopt a similar approach.

In an age where some deny or distort the Holocaust it is important to make documents of the era as freely available as possible. ...

Lord Ahmad, FCDO Minister for Human Rights said: The FCDO is working to release any Holocaust-related material it may hold and to make that public. We are committed to the continued review of our holdings, including those held by our Embassies overseas, and working with other government departments where relevant.

Chief Minister of Jersey John Le Fondré said: A large amount of work has been undertaken by Jersey Archive to collate, digitalise and display the records that it holds related to the Holocaust and more broadly the German occupation of Jersey.

Jersey is committed to transparency and to ensuring that our records from this dark period are available and accessible to all.

Chief Minister of Guernsey, Peter Ferbrache said: Guernsey is committed to ensuring that the records it holds related to the Holocaust, and more generally the Nazi Occupation of the island, are accessible.

A substantial amount of work has already been undertaken over the years to collate and index the records held by the States of Guernsey on this matter, and the Island Archives, where the majority of these records are held, continually works on improving ease of access.

Director of the Wiener Holocaust Library, Dr. Toby Simpson said: The Wiener Library is proud of its long history of throwing light on the darkest chapters of history, and on the

Holocaust in particular. It is crucial to ensure that the past is not ignored or locked away, but confronted and used as a tool for building a better future. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-make-all-its-holocaust-records-accessible-for-research-and-study>

Holocaust Memorial Day 2022: UK statement at OSCE

UK Ambassador Neil Bush marks Holocaust Memorial Day at the OSCE and reiterates UK commitment to combat antisemitism.

... Eighty years ago, on a cold day in January, top-ranking Nazis gathered in a House by a lake on the outskirts of Berlin at Wannsee to discuss the exploitation and mass murder of Jewish people. Under the euphemism of the Final Solution, children would die alongside their parents and grandparents. No one would be spared.

Today, across the globe, there are malicious people who actively deny the historic reality of the Holocaust and seek to minimise the extent of the atrocities committed against the Jewish people by the Nazis and their accomplices during the Second World War.

Distortion of the Holocaust comes from various sources and is not unique to one particular world-wide view. It can be found on both the right and left of the political spectrum, across religious and ethnic lines, and is also informed, in part, by a broader culture of denialism in present-day discourse.

Denying and distorting the Holocaust is a form of antisemitism; we must not stand by when others revise history to erase the horror of the mass murder of Jewish people.

Antisemitism is vile. The UK Government is clear that victims should be supported, and that cowards who commit hateful antisemitic attacks should feel the full force of the law.

We have a longstanding track-record of standing up for the rights of members of all faiths and beliefs internationally, including Jews. Through a Network of Liberty, the UK will continue to combat this abhorrent ideology in all its repugnant forms.

We must promote fact-based knowledge about the history of the Holocaust and strengthen media and information literacy.

We welcome that at last year's Malmö Forum, countries worldwide pledged to take concrete steps to further Holocaust remembrance and combat antisemitism. That landmark conference came twenty years after the Stockholm Forum on the Holocaust laid the foundation for contemporary action on Holocaust education, remembrance and research. The UK will chair the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2024. In 2025, the UK will open a new national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre to stand as a constant reminder of why we must be relentless in the fight against Holocaust denial and antisemitism. ...

The UK was proud to recently cosponsor the historic UN resolution to combat Holocaust denial that was brought forward by Israel and Germany. Together we must continue to stand against antisemitism in all its forms and reject any attempts to deny the facts of the Holocaust.

We encourage participating States to adopt the Alliance's working definition of antisemitism. ...

Each year on Holocaust Memorial Day, we remember the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered during the Holocaust. We remember the thousands of Roma, Sinti, and other victims of Nazi persecution, including LGBT+ and those with disabilities. We remember the victims of other genocides.

It is also a day when we imagine a world free from genocide; a world which has fully recognised where hatred and intolerance, prejudice, and antisemitism can lead.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/holocaust-memorial-day-2022-uk-statement-at-osce>

European Parliament

“Never again”: EP commemorates International Holocaust Remembrance Day

77 years after the liberation of the Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp on 27 January 1945, MEPs honoured the memory of victims of the Holocaust.

Opening the ceremony, EP President Roberta Metsola said: "On Holocaust Remembrance day, we remember crimes committed against humanity in the past, but we also remember the importance of speaking up, in the present. United in diversity, we speak up against Holocaust deniers, against conspiracy myths, against disinformation and against violence of every kind that target and single out members of our communities".

"We will honour the legacy of the Holocaust victims. By never forgetting. By never being complacent. By always, always speaking up."

In her speech, 100-year old Holocaust survivor Margot Friedländer spoke about how her mother and brother were killed in Auschwitz, and how she herself was caught and deported to the concentration camp of Theresienstadt, where she witnessed indescribable suffering but survived.

Mrs Friedländer explained how, after moving back to Berlin from New York at the age of 88, she now travels around Germany to meet pupils, whom she asks to become witnesses to the horrors of the Holocaust as she and her fellow survivors will not be able to for much longer. "Be human! People did what they did because they did not recognise people as people," she said. "You cannot love all people, but everyone deserves to be respected. There is no Christian blood, no Jewish blood, no Muslim blood, there is only human blood. We are all the same. What happened, happened - we can no longer change it. It must only never, ever happen again."

She warned that today the memory of the Holocaust is "politically abused, sometimes even ridiculed and trampled on". The so-called "Jewish Star", she said, is "shamelessly used today by new enemies of democracy to style themselves in public – and in the middle of a democracy! - as victims. On a day like today, we must stand together so that the memory of the Holocaust remains true and is not abused by anyone."

Mrs Friedländer concluded her speech by calling on people to be "vigilant, and not look away as we did then. Hatred, racism, anti-Semitism must not be the last word in history. Treating people as human beings, regardless of skin colour, religion or ethnicity, is especially true today. Humanity, tolerance and respect are more important than ever for peaceful coexistence. That is my wish on this important day of remembrance and commemoration, for the world, for Europe, and for us all."

European Council President Charles Michel stressed that the Holocaust was a European tragedy, and that unimaginable crimes were perpetrated on European soil. "We all have a special responsibility and a special duty. And we are all the guardians of this memory," he said, highlighting that Europe is the home of Jews and that defending European democracy means fighting antisemitism.

In her response to Mrs Friedländer's testimony, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: "The Union we want to build is a place where everyone can be who they want to be. A place where a Jewish woman like Simone Veil, a survivor of the Holocaust, can rise to become the President of this proud European Parliament, a place where everyone is entitled to the same rights, and is treated with the same dignity." The commemoration concluded with a minute's silence in honour of the victims of the Holocaust, and a musical interlude.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220120IPR21417/never-again-ep-commemorates-international-holocaust-remembrance-day>

Council of Europe

Council of Europe marks the International Day of Commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust

Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić paid tribute to those who lost their lives.

“Today, we remember the horrors of the Holocaust. In doing so, it is important to remind ourselves of how the terror started. What became the Shoah did not start with physical attacks. It began with ... hateful words, slander, and conspiracy theories that fed on anti-Jewish sentiment that had long existed in parts of Europe.”

On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), President Tiny Kox warned that vigilance was needed to prevent future tragedies.

“We all have the obligation to make sure that this can and will never ever happen again. Many of those who survived the Holocaust made it their mission in life to tell the world what they experienced. And it’s all the more important to continue to do so, because anti-Semitism did not end after the Second World War. Today, starting from the dark corners of the Internet, xenophobia and anti-Semitism are once again on the rise. We need urgent action to tackle it now.”

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, currently holding the rotating Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, said “The memory of the tragedy of the Shoah must guide us in our ongoing efforts to build ever more inclusive and tolerant societies based on full respect for the dignity of every human being. The understanding and knowledge of the Shoah, and the fight against any form of denial and distortion of this terrible tragedy, are indispensable elements for preserving the founding values of the Italian Republic and the European project”

To read the full press release see

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/council-of-europe-marks-the-international-day-of-commemoration-of-the-victims-of-the-holocaust>

Video messages for Holocaust Remembrance Day

- Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic
- Tiny Kox, President, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly
- Ambassador Michele Giacomelli, Permanent Representative of Italy to Council of Europe
- Haïm Assaraf , Ambassador of Israel to International Institutions in France
- Romani Rose, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma
- David Cupina, Président de les “Oublié-e-s » de la Mémoire

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/antisemitic-anti-muslim-hatred-hate-crimes/holocaust-remembrance-2022>

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Commemoration must be coupled with education to combat anti-Semitism, build peaceful societies, OSCE says on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

... “On this day, we commemorate the 77th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp and pay tribute to all victims who perished as a result of the brutal German Nazi persecution: six million Jews, half a million Roma, Poles, Soviet citizens and representatives of many other nations, national minorities and other targeted groups and individuals,” said OSCE Chairman-in-Office Zbigniew Rau. “But we also need to be forward-thinking if we are to find lasting solutions and end the ongoing hatred that blights so many societies.”

As the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is

marked worldwide, we are reminded that anti-Semitism is a pernicious form of hatred that cannot be confined to a distant and painful past. Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, Jewish communities have been among those targeted by baseless conspiracy theories, negative stereotyping and scapegoating. Protests against public health measures have included Holocaust symbols and imagery, grossly trivializing, diminishing and misappropriating the Holocaust and devaluing the suffering of its victims. Many anti-Semitic and other hateful narratives are spreading unchecked, with a devastating impact on the communities attacked and a particularly damaging effect on young people.

“Today, we remember all those who were murdered – not for anything they had done, but for who they were,” said Matteo Mecacci, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). “With ever fewer survivors left to tell us about the horrors they experienced and declining knowledge among young people about the tragedy of the Holocaust, the importance of Holocaust commemoration and education cannot be underestimated. These are the best – and sometimes only – tools at our disposal to ensure those horrors are never repeated.”

ODIHR is publishing the seventh edition of its overview of Holocaust remembrance and education today. Providing information on the commemoration and study of the Holocaust and the genocide of Roma and Sinti across the OSCE region, the overview encourages governments to draw on each other’s good practices and further develop their own activities in the future. In recognition of the importance of education in combating anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, ODIHR has also developed numerous resources to counter prejudice, including [dedicated curricula](#) for schools developed together with UNESCO.

“Looking back on those dark days, we recall all the steps that were not taken, the doors that were shut, the heads that were turned, that might have otherwise prevented the Holocaust,” said Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism. “We cannot change the past, but it is in our hands to stop the scourge of anti-Semitism and broader hatreds that threaten us today and in the future. Remembrance must be a call to action.” ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/510773>

Holocaust Memorial Days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region, 2022

<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/d/8/510323.pdf>

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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

Marriage Law (Northern Ireland) (closing date 18 February 2022)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-marriage-law>

Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights (closing date 8 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights>

CPS: Public interest guidance for suicide pact and 'mercy killing' type cases

(closing date 9 April 2022)

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/consultation/consultation-public-interest-guidance-suicide-pact-and-mercy-killing-type-cases-0>

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