



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Holocaust

### Scottish Parliament Motion

**Michelle Thomson (SNP) [S6M-03128] Vision Schools Awards 2022** – That the Parliament welcomes the Vision Schools Awards 2022, which will take place on 10 February 2022; understands that Vision Schools Scotland is a partnership between the School of Education and Social Sciences at the University of the West of Scotland and the Holocaust Educational Trust; notes that Vision Schools Scotland was established in 2017 and that its aims are to promote excellence in Holocaust teaching by identifying and rewarding schools that embed Holocaust education in their teaching, creating opportunities for teachers to share good practice of school-based Holocaust education, and promoting and presenting face-to-face and online Continued Professional Learning in Holocaust education to teachers, helping them develop confidence and proficiency in Holocaust teaching; congratulates Grangemouth High School, which, it understands, will be awarded a Level 1 award for demonstrating sustainability, commitment, and good practice in Holocaust Education; considers that it is important to ensure that the lessons of the atrocities of the past help to shape a better and more peaceful future for all humanity; congratulates all schools that are being awarded at this year's awards, and wishes everyone involved in Vision Schools Scotland continued success in improving the collective understanding of the Holocaust and its impact on the world.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-03128>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Military Alliances

**Kenny MacAskill (Alba) [114950]** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will

publish (a) a summary of and (b) the full defence cooperation agreement signed with Israel in 2020.

**James Heapey:** In December 2020, the UK and Israel signed a joint agreement to strengthen the defence relationship between the two nations. The agreement is an important piece of defence diplomacy that formalises and deepens cooperation. Both the UK and Israel share a commitment to improving and integrating capabilities in maritime, land, air, space, and cyber and electromagnetic domains. The cooperation includes defence medical training, organisational design and concepts, and defence education. The Ministry of Defence is not publishing the agreement for national security reasons.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114950>

#### **Israel: Armed Forces**

**Kenny MacAskill (Alba)** [114951] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Israeli military personnel have been trained in the UK in the last three years.

**James Heapey:** In the last three years, eight Israeli military personnel have attended courses in the UK. These courses include a course at the Royal College of Defence Studies, the Ordinance Design course, the Amphibious warfare course, and a medical course at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114951>

#### **Israel: Armed Forces**

**Kenny MacAskill (Alba)** [114952] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK military personnel are in Israel as of 31 January 2022; where those personnel are based; and what training they offer to Israeli forces.

**James Heapey:** As of 31 January 2022, the UK have four military personnel in Israel. They are all based in the British Embassy in Tel Aviv. They carry out key activities in Defence Engagement and Diplomacy, as well as carrying out key administrative processes. The personnel do not provide training, but help facilitate opportunities between the two countries. Periodically additional UK personnel visit Israel for training, exercises and engagement purposes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114952>

#### **Union of Agricultural Work Committees: Expenditure**

**Robert Largan (Conservative)** [114977] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much financial support the Government has provided to the Palestinian NGO Union of Agricultural Work Committees (a) directly and (b) via second and third-party vendors over the last five years.

**James Cleverly:** The UK has not provided funding to the Union of Agricultural Work Committees in the past five years.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114977>

#### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Andy Slaughter (Labour)** [115853] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what reports she has received of the (a) number and (b) change in number of Palestinian children held in solitary confinement in Israeli military detention in the most recent period for which information is available; and if she will she seek assurances from the Israeli authorities that they will end the practice.

**James Cleverly:** We do not collect this information. The British Embassy in Tel Aviv has a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-01/115853>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Caroline Lucas (Green)** [114722] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will seek assurances from her Israeli counterpart that the Government of Israel (a) opposes the detention of Palestinian children under the age of twelve and (b) will hold Israeli soldiers to account for incidents where they have been found to have forcibly detained children under that age.

**James Cleverly:** We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding children in detention and continue to raise this with the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114722>

### Amal Nakhleh

**Caroline Lucas (Green)** [114723] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make representations to the Israeli authorities for the immediately release 18 year old Amal Nakhleh from Israeli administrative detention without charge or trial lasting more than one year.

**James Cleverly:** We are aware of Amal Nakhleh's case. Officials from the British Embassy Tel Aviv raised Amal Nakhleh's case with the Israeli Ministry of Justice on 27 January. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law and either charge or release detainees.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-31/114723>

## House of Commons Library

### LGBT+ rights and issues in the Middle East

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9457/CBP-9457.pdf>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

**Mercedes Villalba (Labour)** [S6M-03059] **Amnesty International Report: Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians** – That the Parliament acknowledges the publication of Amnesty International's report, *Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity*; notes the report's findings that Israel, through laws, policies, and practices, has, Amnesty International states, established and maintained an institutionalised regime of oppression and domination of the Palestinian population; further notes the view in the report that the regime of oppression and domination has seen inhumane acts of forcible transfer, torture, unlawful killings, and the denial of basic freedom be committed against the Palestinian population; understands that Amnesty International's view is that Israel's actions amount to the crime against humanity of apartheid, under both the Apartheid Convention and the Rome Statute; notes the calls from Amnesty International for the international community to act, including looking at all options such as bans on the sale of arms to Israel and the sale of products from Israeli settlements; further notes the belief that the UK and Scottish governments should do more to support the Palestinian people, and notes the calls for both governments to look at all practical options to help bring an end to what Amnesty International describes as the system of apartheid operated by Israel.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-03059>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/MDE1551412022ENGLISH.pdf>

### **Settlement Activity Feeds Hopelessness, Lessens Prospects for Negotiated Solution, Secretary-General Tells Palestinian Rights Committee**

... The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, continues to pose a significant challenge to international peace and security.

The promise of the independence of the Palestinian State remains unfulfilled.

Political, economic and security conditions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory are deteriorating as Palestinians experience high levels of dispossession, violence and insecurity.

We urgently need to intensify collective efforts to resolve the conflict and end the occupation in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements.

The goal remains two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, viable and sovereign Palestinian State — living side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders, on the basis of the pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both States. There is no plan B.

I am encouraged by recent engagement between senior Israeli and Palestinian officials. I urge both sides to expand these contacts to encompass underlying political issues.

Piecemeal approaches to the question of Palestine will only ensure that the underlying issues perpetuating the conflict remain unaddressed. Unilateral steps and illegal actions that drive the conflict must cease. Incitement to violence will lead nowhere and must also be rejected by all.

I am concerned by unabated violence across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including settler violence and military operations that have led to numerous deaths.

It is essential that the parties solidify the cessation of hostilities and support economic development in Gaza. Concerted efforts are essential to ensure calm, strengthen Palestinian institutions, restore hope and avoid a deadly escalation of violence.

Illegal settlement activity, demolitions and evictions also continue, including in East Jerusalem, undermining international humanitarian and human rights law — and feeding hopelessness, animosity and diminishing prospects for a negotiated solution. All settlement activity is illegal. It must stop.

Continued human rights violations against Palestinians significantly impede their ability to live in security and develop their communities and economies. I also call on all parties to preserve the status quo at the holy sites in the Old City of Jerusalem. ...

I remain concerned about the dire fiscal situation facing the Palestinian Authority, which is undermining its institutional stability and ability to provide services to its people. ...

Let me also note recent Israeli decisions to increase the movement of goods and people in and out of the Gaza Strip. While a welcome development, it is important to expand such steps and work towards a full lifting of the debilitating closures ...

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/sgsm21136.doc.htm>

### **Rejecting Piecemeal Approaches, Secretary-General Says Concrete Steps Urgently Needed to Achieve Two-State Solution, as Palestinian Rights Committee Begins 2022 Session**

... Feda Abdelhady-Nasser, an observer for the State of Palestine, regretted to note that 2022 has begun the same as 2021, as the occupation continues amid violence, displacement and trauma against the backdrop of a global pandemic. Leading human rights organizations have reached the same conclusions: that Israel is imposing an apartheid regime against the Palestinian people. As such, the international community must be clear: this is not about antisemitism, but about human rights, based on facts and international law. ...

The Palestine leadership has proven that it is a partner for peace, she said, reiterating its

commitment to using all diplomatic means to bring an end to occupation and achieve freedom and rights for all Palestinians. ...

Cheikh Niang (Senegal), speaking upon his re-election as Committee Chair ... [said] In 2021, the Palestinian people faced a particularly challenging year amid the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the further advancement of Israeli settlements, continued movement restrictions and the disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces, which led to heavy human and material losses in May. ...

... he underlined the need to shore up the international community's commitment to a two-State solution, which requires a relaunch of the peace process. The international community and in particular the Middle East Quartet should support the Palestinian Authority in working to bring an end to the conflict, and in facing such challenges as terrorism, poverty, violence, and exclusion. ...

Highlighting some of the work ahead, he said the Committee will hold several virtual events during the session, including one in March on the issue of "apartheid" in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, featuring prominent human rights organizations, including Amnesty International. ...

The representative of Egypt ... said the Palestinian cause is currently at a critical juncture and facing a range of serious new threats. While neither side currently wishes to see a change in the status quo, recent months have seen increasing Israeli violations at holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as accelerating settlement activities. ...

Lebanon's delegate ... said the Israeli practices of house demolitions, uprooting Palestinians from their homes, arbitrary detention and daily humiliation and aggression continue unabated. "Despite international efforts, multiple peace initiatives and relevant United Nations resolutions, the reality on the ground for the Palestinians has worsened over the last 70 years," he said, as Israel continues to disregard international law. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/gapal1444.doc.htm>

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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>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-02-08/debates/1AB52848-6E2A-49BE-9D95-9221298E14C3/NationalityAndBordersBill>

## **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/>

Final Stage, Plenary

<http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2022/02/08&docID=366587#3949509>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 9 days**

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

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

**Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Draft Corporate Plan 2022-2025**

(closing date 25 February 2022)

<https://www.equalityni.org/CorporatePlanConsultation#gsc.tab=0>

**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>

**Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland** (closing date 28 March 2022)

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-hate-crime-legislation-northern-ireland>

**Trade with Israel** (closing date 30 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-israel-call-for-input>

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