



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Schools: Antisemitism

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [141912] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Community Safety Trust's Antisemitic Incidents Report January-June 2021 which reported a 491 per cent rise in antisemitic hate incidents in schools compared to the same period the previous year, what steps his Department is taking to tackle rising levels of antisemitism in schools

Robin Walker: The government is clear that antisemitism, as with all forms of bullying and hatred, is abhorrent and has no place in our schools.

In response to the reported increase in such incidents during an escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May 2021, the former Secretary of State for Education, my right hon. Friend for South Staffordshire, wrote to schools to remind them of their responsibilities to deal with antisemitic incidents with due seriousness as well as their legal duties regarding political impartiality. On 17 February 2022, the department published further guidance on political impartiality in schools that helps to ensure educational initiatives in schools are not politically biased or one-sided. This guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-impartiality-in-schools/political-impartiality-in-schools>

The government continues to take action to support schools tackle all forms of bullying, including antisemitism. Our preventing and tackling bullying guidance sets out that schools should develop a consistent approach to monitoring bullying incidents and evaluating the effectiveness of their approaches. It also directs schools to organisations who can provide support with tackling bullying related to race, religion and nationality, as well as sexual harassment and sexual bullying. Between August 2021 and March 2022, the department provided over £1.1 million of funding to five anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying.

The government has also supported Holocaust education for many years and is fully committed to continuing this support. In recognition of its importance, the Holocaust is the only historic event which is compulsory within the national

curriculum for history at key stage 3. Effective teaching about the Holocaust can support pupils to learn about the possible consequences of antisemitism and extremism, to understand how society can prevent the repeat of such a catastrophe. The department provides funding for several programmes to support school pupils' and teachers' understanding of the Holocaust.

The department continues to publish information, guidance and support for teachers and school leaders on how to challenge radical views, including racist and discriminatory beliefs, on Educate Against Hate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-17/141912>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://cst.org.uk/data/file/f/c/Incidents%20Report%20Jan-Jun%202021.1627901074.pdf>

The letter referred to above can be read at

<https://twitter.com/gavinwilliamson/status/1398374786871537664?lang=en>

The website referred to above can be read at

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Police Scotland

Police Scotland sets out ongoing commitment to tackling hate crime

Police Scotland is appealing for anyone who has been targeted by hate crime to come forward as new figures continue to show a rise in reports.

Between April and December 2021, reported hate crimes (5,375) were up 5.5% on the five year average (5,096) and slightly higher than the year before (5,365).

Race-related hate continues to make up the majority of hate crime reported at just under 60% of the total, while those reporting they were targeted because of their sexual orientation accounted for over 22% of reports.

Although reports have risen, Police Scotland is seeking to increase awareness of what hate crime is and how to report an incident to support more reporting. ...

Chief Superintendent Linda Jones said: "Targeting anyone because of who they are is deplorable. Hate crime should have no place in society and will not be tolerated.

"Hate crime can leave people feeling isolated, spread through their family and into the wider community and create pockets of people who may feel unwelcome or rejected.

"Everyone has a right to live safely as their true and authentic selves, without fear of prejudice.

"We understand it can be hard for people to report a hate crime, and in some cases to even recognise or acknowledge that they have been a victim. Some people have been exposed to hate crimes for weeks, months or even years before they are able to report. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2022/march/police-scotland-sets-out-ongoing-commitment-to-tackling-hate-crime/>

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Israel

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Occupied Palestinian Territory: Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at Human Rights Council 49th Session

... I will begin with the *fourteenth periodic report on the human rights situation in the*

Occupied Palestinian Territory (A/HRC/49/83) pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1.

Covering the period from 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021, this report addresses recurring violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Israel and by Palestinian armed groups, as well as further violations of international human rights law by Israel, the State of Palestine and the de facto authorities in Gaza. ...

In May 2021, hostilities in Gaza dramatically escalated. Over 11 days, 261 Palestinians were killed, including 41 women, 67 children, and three people with disabilities, most in Israeli strikes. At least 130 were civilians. Over 2,200 Palestinians were injured. Ten Israeli citizens and residents were killed by rockets launched by Palestinian armed groups, and 710 others were injured.

There were serious concerns regarding Israel's compliance with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions under international humanitarian law. ...

Indiscriminate attacks carried out by Palestinian armed groups were a violation of international humanitarian law, causing civilian casualties and significant damage to civilian objects in Israel.

Israel's continued use of collective punishment practices, expressly prohibited by international humanitarian law, violated a number of human rights. The blockade of Gaza, which entered its fifteenth year, continued to have an extremely harmful impact on the rights of the entire civilian population.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities continued to conduct punitive demolitions of homes of Palestinians who had carried out, or who were alleged to have carried out, attacks against Israelis. This collective punishment disproportionately affected women and children. Israeli authorities also withheld the bodies of 23 additional Palestinians, including children, killed by Israeli Security Forces during this period. ...

The report also highlights new repressive measures of the Israeli authorities against civil society. On 19 October, Israeli authorities designated six prominent Palestinian human rights and humanitarian organisations as 'terrorist organisations,' based on vague and unsubstantiated allegations. ...

The report also details human rights violations committed by the Palestinian Authority and the de facto authorities in Gaza. ... Ongoing concerns remain concerning restrictions on civic space and on freedom of opinion and expression. Also, in both the West Bank and Gaza, individuals arrested by security forces alleged ill-treatment or torture, restricted access to legal aid and violations of fair trial guarantees. ...

... *Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/HRC/49/85)* ... [details] the expansion of settlements ...

Of particular concern was the continued advancement of settlements in and around East Jerusalem, further consolidating a ring of settlement blocs around the city. ...

Israel also began registration of land ownership in occupied East Jerusalem. As the occupying power, Israel is prohibited from applying its domestic laws in occupied East Jerusalem, and may not extend its sovereignty to, nor acquire permanent ownership over land it occupies there. ...

Palestinians across Area C, in East Jerusalem and in the H2 area of Hebron, remain at risk of forcible transfer. ... I note that that forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, amounting to a war crime.

Alarmingly, settler violence continued to increase: 502 incidents of settler violence were recorded in the West Bank including East Jerusalem compared with 339 incidents in the previous period. The severity of attacks also intensified ...

Israeli suppression of Palestinian protests against settlement activities is of grave concern. Amidst mainly peaceful protests during the reporting period, Israeli Security Forces killed ten and injured almost 11,000 Palestinians. ...

Human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/HRC/49/84) ... describe the persistence of human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in the occupied Syrian

Golan, with a concerning lack of accountability.

I reiterate that the main driver of human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is the occupation. ...

A lack of accountability lies at the heart of the ongoing violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, sustaining a cycle of violence and deprivation which appears to have no end. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/03/occupied-palestinian-territory>

Implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1 – Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/49/83)

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_83_AdvanceUneditedVersion.docx

Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/HRC/49/85)

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_85_AdvanceUneditedVersion.docx

Human Rights in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/HRC/49/84)

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/49/84>

Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: Israel has imposed upon Palestine an apartheid reality in a post-apartheid world

... Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, said the report addressed the question as to whether Israel's acquisitive and repressive practices over the course of its 55-year-old regime had curdled from an endless occupation into something darker, harsher and more ominous. He had concluded that the political system of entrenched rule in the occupied Palestinian territory satisfied the prevailing evidentiary standard for the existence of apartheid. ...

Israel was not present in the room to take the floor at a country concerned.

State of Palestine, speaking as a country concerned, said that the apartheid laws approved by the Israeli Knesset, such as the Nationality Law, the Citizenship Law, the Anti-Terrorism Law, the Planning and Building Law, in addition to the Settlement Law and dozens of other laws, constituted a discriminatory legal system. The Israeli Head of Government and most of his Ministers had declared that they were against the establishment of the State of Palestine, they rejected any political negotiations and worked to continue and consolidate the de facto rule, which constituted an apartheid regime. ...

In the ensuing interactive dialogue, speakers said that since the occupation, Israel's apartheid regime had been evident in its practices, such as land grabs and settlement establishment, with illegal demographic changes and strategic fragmentation of the territory. The occupying power continued to enjoy impunity. Israel had flagrantly violated its obligations under international law, depriving the Palestinian people from enjoying their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the right of return. Israel was committing the crime of apartheid in the Palestinian territory, and this apartheid regime must be dismantled through all legal means. ...

Michelle Bachelet, High Commissioner for Human Rights, then [presented three reports](#) ...

Israel was not present in the room to take the floor as a country concerned.

State of Palestine, speaking as a country concerned, said it was evident that the occupying power's human rights violations had continued ... There was continuous targeting of Palestinian civilians and children. These constituted extra-judicial killings, and there were daily attacks on demonstrators, abuse at checkpoints, and denial of movement for those requiring medical treatment.

Syria, speaking as a country concerned, said the illegal settlement activities constituted the main source of many human rights violations: the occupying entity continued to expand settlements, confiscate lands, take natural resources, and install different populations in areas, in total contradiction of its international obligations, seeking to change the demographic make-up of the occupied Syrian Golan. ...

In the general debate ... speakers said any attempts to undermine the agenda item would further erode the reliability of the United Nations system and normalise occupation in international norms. Israel's continued policies and practices had resulted in flagrant human rights violations and abuses, including brutalisation of children, torture, forcible transfers, and colonisation of land. Israel had no interest in achieving a just peace, and committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the crime of apartheid. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-occupied-palestinian-territories>

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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>

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>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/45957/documents/1680>

**** Online Safety Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate: Government Response to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's Eighth Report

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/9408/documents/161169/default/>

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

**** closes tomorrow**

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

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

**** closes in 3 days**

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