



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Israeli Settlements: Construction

Fleur Anderson (Labour) [45604] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the construction of the E1 Israeli settlement.

Israeli Settlements

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [46156] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has made representations to the Israeli government on its E1 settlement plan.

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [46157] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of the Israeli government's E1 settlement plan on the human rights of Palestinian residents in that area.

Gillian Keegan: The UK welcomes the decision to postpone the discussion to advance the E1 settlement plan. We will monitor developments closely. The UK continues to urge the Government of Israel to permanently end its settlement expansion and settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and advancement of the E1 settlement plan. The former Minister Milling, raised our concerns with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Roll on 22 June. The UK continues to raise our opposition to settlement advancements at the UN Security Council.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/46156>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/46157>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Gaza: Israel

Caroline Lucas (Green) [44948] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, in the context of the Israeli Military airstrikes on Gaza in May 2021, whether she has made representations to her Israeli counterpart on the impact of the damage to civilian infrastructure of those bombings on equitable and

timely access to healthcare for patients in Gaza; whether the Government is providing support to increase access to healthcare for patients in Gaza; and if she will make a statement.

Palestinians: Health

Caroline Lucas (Green) [45145] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has held discussions with her Israeli counterpart on the impact of the shelling in May 2021 of the agricultural chemical warehouse belonging to the Khudair Group on the environmental determinants of health of Palestinians in surrounding areas; and if she will make a statement.

Gillian Keegan: We have made clear our concern about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza, including significant damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure, hospitals, and clinics following the escalation in violence in May 2021. The UK continues to urge Israel to ensure humanitarian access into and out of Gaza, including for essential health services. The UK remains a longstanding supporter to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides core services, including health and education to Palestinian refugees in Gaza.

The UK Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of access to healthcare, including critical health services, with the Israeli authorities. The wounded and critically ill in Gaza should be able to access the urgent medical care they need.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/44948>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/45145>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Gaza: Health Services

Philippa Whitford (SNP) [45336] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of Israel's permit regime on the mental health of patients in Gaza in need of treatment that is only available elsewhere.

Gaza: Cancer

Philippa Whitford (SNP) [45343] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of the closure of Gaza and associated movement restrictions on survival rates of patients with cancer in Gaza.

Gillian Keegan: We have made clear our concern about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza. The UK Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of access to healthcare, including critical health services, with the Israeli authorities, most recently on 1 June. We are urging the Government of Israel to ensure this access is maintained. The wounded and critically ill in Gaza should be able to access the urgent medical care they need.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/45336>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/45343>

Lebanon: Hezbollah

Andrew Percy (Conservative) [44974] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether she has had recent discussions with her Lebanese counterpart on the launching of drones by Hezbollah towards Israel's Karish gas facility.

Gillian Keegan: Our commitment to Israel's security is unwavering. Lebanon and Israel are important regional partners for the UK and we collaborate closely on issues of defence and security. This includes regular discussions at the highest

levels on the destabilising threat posed by Hizballah activity across the region. We condemn Hizballah's activity which directly threatens regional stability and endangers civilians in Lebanon and Israel.

FCDO Minister of State, Lord [Tariq] Ahmad of Wimbledon most recently discussed regional security with Lebanese Foreign Minister Bou Habib on 6 July. The Former Foreign Secretary also raised this issue during a call with Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid on 22 June.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/44974>

Downing Street

PM meeting with Prime Minister Yair Lapid: 21 September 2022

Prime Minister Liz Truss met Yair Lapid, Prime Minister of Israel, at the UN General Assembly on 21 September.

They discussed the huge opportunities to boost cooperation between the UK and Israel on strategic priorities, including defence, cyber security, trade and green technology.

The Prime Minister informed Prime Minister Lapid about her review of the current location of the British Embassy in Israel.

The Prime Minister welcomed progress on a new Free Trade Agreement and reiterated the UK's commitment to signing a high-ambition deal which delivers for the digital and services sectors.

The leaders discussed the Middle East Peace Process and regional security, stressing the need for a long-term strategy to contain the threat from Iran.

The Prime Minister also raised the importance of continued international unity in opposition to Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, including on economic sanctions.

Turning to recent events, she thanked Prime Minister Lapid for his kind condolences on the death of Her Late Majesty The Queen, noting the close ties between British and Israeli people.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-meeting-with-prime-minister-yair-lapid-21-september-2022>

United Nations

Warning of Its Global Threat on Multiple Levels, World Leaders Stress Urgency of Ending Ongoing Conflict in Ukraine, as General Assembly Debate Continues

... Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of Iran ... recalled that the region has not seen an occupying Power as savage as the Zionist regime, which has managed to form the world's biggest prison in Gaza. The illegal settlements on Palestinian territory and the killing of Palestinian children show that seven decades of Israeli occupation and savagery has not ended.

He went on to elaborate on the double standards used to describe nuclear science capacities of Iran. Stressing that Iran is only pursuing peaceful endeavours, he said his country is not seeking to build or obtain nuclear weapons. ...

Hage Geingob, President of Namibia, said ... "Self-determination is a human right," ... urging the Assembly to start implementing the two-State solution as the only viable alternative that can end inequality and bring peace to the peoples of Palestine, Israel and the whole region. ...

Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon, stated ... that the two-State solution is the only way to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and achieve peace and security. ...

Mohammad Najib Azmi Mikati, President of the Council of Ministers of Lebanon ... stressed that it is time for the injustice done against the Palestinian people to end, with a

sovereign and independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, and implementation of all international resolutions in that regard, including the return of refugees. Emphasizing the centrality of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in mitigating Palestinian suffering, he expressed deep concern over the accumulated deficit in its budget, jeopardizing delivery of services. ...

Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, said ... "While we work to address contemporary conflicts, we should not ignore long-standing ones, such as Palestine," ... asking that Israel be held accountable for its destructive actions impairing a two-State solution. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12447.doc.htm>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325>

Online Safety Bill

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

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

Scottish Parliament

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes tomorrow**

Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-25 (closing date 23 September 2022)

<https://tinyurl.com/mpunv6cw>

Increasing the use of mediation in the civil justice system (closing date 4 October 2022)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/dispute-resolution/increasing-the-use-of-mediation/>

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