



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Charities and Churches: Energy

**Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op)** [49118] To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help (a) charities and (b) churches improve their energy efficiency.

**Graham Stuart:** Charities and non-profit organisations including churches may be entitled to a reduction in VAT, and exclusion from the main rates of the Climate Change Levy, on the energy they use for non-business purposes.

Information on where to find advice and grants can be found on GOV.UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-07/49188>

*The information referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/vat-charities/what-qualifies-for-relief>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exemptions-from-climate-change-levy>

#### Social Services: Religion

**James Cartlidge (Conservative)** [45968] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to acknowledge and take account of the religious beliefs of people who are (a) entering the social care system and (b) lack mental capacity as a result of the progression of a neurodegenerative disease.

**Neil O'Brien:** People who lack mental capacity to make specific decisions about their lives, including those with neurodegenerative diseases, are protected by the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). If a best interests decision needs to be made under the MCA, the decision-maker should consider all relevant circumstances including, as far as reasonably ascertainable, the person's beliefs and values, which may include their religious views. Local authorities are also required under the Care Act 2014 to take account of individual's religious beliefs when assessing their needs for care and support and planning their care and support with them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/45968>

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## House of Commons Written Answers

### **Gaza: Armed Conflict**

**Beth Winter (Labour)** [45676] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if her Department will make an assessment of whether British-made equipment was used in hostilities between Islamic Jihad in Gaza and Israel between 5 and 7 August 2022.

**Gillian Keegan:** The Government takes its defence export responsibilities extremely seriously and operates some of the most robust export controls in the world. All applications for export licences are assessed on a case-by-case basis against strict criteria. We will not issue a licence if there is a clear risk that the equipment might be used for internal repression. The Government continues to monitor closely the situation in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, and if extant licences are found to be no longer consistent with the Criteria, those licences will be revoked.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-02/45676>

### **Israeli Settlements: International Law**

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour)** [49176] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his Israeli counterpart on that country's E1 settlement plan and its compliance with international law.

**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 UK continues to raise our opposition to settlement advancements at the UN Security Council.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-09-07/49176>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motion

**Alyn Smith (SNP)** [404] **UK Embassy in Israel** – That this House expresses its deep concern regarding the Government's review into moving the UK Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; notes that, on 21st September 2022, the Prime Minister told her Israeli counterpart about her review of the current location of the British embassy in Israel during a meeting in New York City; maintains that Jerusalem holds a unique position under international law; reminds the Government that, when the Israeli Government passed its 1980 basic law unilaterally naming Jerusalem the united capital of Israel, the UN Security Council declared this policy a violation of international law; reminds the UK Government of UN Security Council Resolution 478 (1980), calling upon UN Member States that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City; reiterates that any country which recognises exclusive Israeli jurisdiction and political legitimacy over Jerusalem without a mutually agreed peace settlement between Israelis and Palestinians is in violation of Resolution 478 (1980); asserts that a comprehensive peace settlement between Israelis and Palestinians is a pre-requisite for any change in the international community's position towards Jerusalem; reminds the Government that then-President Donald Trump's decision in 2017 to move the US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem sparked international condemnation; reasserts that if the UK is truly an arbiter for peace-building and reconciliation, it cannot consider moving the UK Embassy

in Israel; and demands an urgent statement on the floor of the House on this issue.  
<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60114>

## Downing Street

**Liz Truss** Great meeting PM @yairlapid yesterday on strengthening [British flag; Israeli flag] ties, including progress towards a Free Trade Agreement. It's vital we maintain our unity in opposition to Russia, contain the threat of Iran and guarantee long-term security in the Middle East.

<https://twitter.com/trussliz/status/1572899745957400578>

## United Nations

### General Assembly: Plenary

Yair Lapid, Prime Minister of Israel, recalling the “historic” Negev Summit which in March brought together representatives from the United States, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and his country, underscored that his nation has been able to prosper because it chose the future over the past, peace over war, and partnership over seclusion and isolation. He further noted that his country is a vibrant democracy, where Jews, Muslims and Christians live together in “full civic equality”.

He went on to stress that there are two major threats hanging over the head of his country, as well as of the world. The first is the nuclear threat, he continued, with the fear that “terrorist States and terrorist organizations will get their hands on the nuclear weapons”. The second threat is the demise of truth, where reckless politicians, totalitarian States and radical organizations are undermining the perception of reality. Raising an example of “fake news” about Israel, he asked the international community: “Why are you listening to people who have invested billions of dollars in distorting the truth?” He underscored that his country will not be silent against efforts to spread lies about it.

Pointing to Iran, he stressed that “there is only one Member State in the United Nations that openly states its wish to destroy another.” Noting that not only has the country “founded the largest terrorist organization, Hizbullah” while funding Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, he further noted that Iran is making efforts to obtain a nuclear weapon. He called on the international community to make clear to Tehran that the world will not respond with words but with military force if it does. “We will do whatever it takes. Iran will not get a nuclear weapon,” he added.

To resolve the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, he stressed that an agreement with the Palestinians based on the two-State solution is the “right thing” for his country’s security, economy and its children, adding that many Israelis support this solution. “War is a surrender to all that is bad. Peace is the victory of all that is good,” he pointed out. He further noted that there is one condition for this solution, which is that the “future Palestinian State” needs to be a peaceful one and not become another terror base that threatens the well-being and the very existence of Israel.

Particularly in Gaza, he emphasized that his country did everything the world had asked it to do, such as dismantling its settlements and military bases, when it left the area 17 years ago. However, he continued, in less than a year Hamas came to power, replacing such facilities with terrorist training camps and rocket launch sites. “Since we left Gaza, over 20,000 rockets and missiles have been fired at Israel,” he highlighted. He stated that his country is ready to lift the restrictions placed on Gaza, on the condition that the firing of rockets and missiles are stopped. “The burden of proof is not on us,” he continued, adding that his country keeps its word and fulfils its promises, proven by peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, the Abraham Accords and the Negev Summit. ...

To read the full press release see  
<https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12449.doc.htm>

To watch a video of Yair Lapid's full speech see  
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127551>

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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 today**

**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