



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs

Israel

Other Relevant Information

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

## Home Affairs

### Home Office

#### **Places of Worship Protective Security Fund open for applications**

Mosques and Muslim faith schools have been given access to £24.5 million for security measures to protect their places of worship and schools and make our streets safer ...

Muslims continue to experience an increased threat of hate crime. In 2020/2021, 45% of religious hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales were targeted against Muslims.

From today, places of worship can bid for funding to put in place security measures to help tackle this threat. This could include the installation of CCTV cameras and perimeter fencing to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect worshippers. Muslims will be also able to register their interest in security guarding services at mosques, to ensure that their communities can worship safely and without fear.

In addition, £3.5 million is available for other faith communities through the government's [Places of Worship Fund](#). Applications are now open and all places of worship who feel they are vulnerable to hate crime are encouraged to apply. This scheme runs alongside the Jewish Community Protective Security grant, which provides protective security for the Jewish community and was recently renewed for this year. ...

The Places of Worship Fund is part of the government's commitment to ensure that faith communities in England and Wales are protected from the threat of hate crime attacks by providing funding to places of worship such as churches, mosques, gurdwaras, temples and associated faith community centres in order to improve physical security.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales shows a long-term decline in overall hate crime. Increases in police recorded hate crime in recent years have been driven by improvements in crime recording and a better identification of what constitutes a hate crime.

As part of this increased package, the government is introducing a new scheme for Muslim faith schools to provide additional protection that will be rolled out later in the year.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-protective-security-fund-open-for-applications--2>

## Charity Commission

### **Commission orders the winding-up of charity funding TV programmes which encouraged hate speech and violence**

The Charity Commission has found misconduct and/or mismanagement by the trustees of Islamic Research Foundation International (IRFI). This includes their decision to continue to fund Peace TV channels despite several breaches of Ofcom's Broadcasting Code. ... This included programmes that incited violence and murder, and programmes containing hate speech and abusive treatment. ...

Tim Hopkins, Assistant Director, Investigations and Inquiries at the Charity Commission, said: This charity was mismanaged by its trustees, including through their failure to manage the charity's relationship with Peace TV channels following Ofcom's findings. These and other repeated governance failures rendered the charity unviable, and the Commission's intervention has secured its dissolution.

As part of our intervention into this charity we determined that Dr Naik's conduct makes him unfit to act as a trustee or hold senior management positions in any charity in England and Wales. Our order protects charities by prohibiting him from acting. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/commission-orders-the-winding-up-of-charity-funding-tv-programmes-which-encouraged-hate-speech-and-violence>

**To read the Inquiry report see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-inquiry-islamic-research-foundation-international/charity-inquiry-islamic-research-foundation-international>

TOP

## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Diplomatic Relations**

**Emily Thornberry (Labour)** [1126] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, in what year (a) Eritrea, (b) Palau, (c) Palestine, (d) Somaliland, (e) Taiwan and (f) Timor Leste were granted privileges in the UK within the terms of the (i) Consular Relations Act 1968 and (ii) Diplomatic Privileges Act 1964.

**Amanda Milling:** The Diplomatic Privileges Act 1964 and the Consular Relations Act 1968 give effect in domestic law to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations respectively. The UK maintains diplomatic and consular relations with Eritrea, which acceded to both Conventions on 14 January 1997, and with Timor-Leste which acceded to the Conventions on 30 January 2004; Palau, Somaliland and Taiwan are not party to either Convention. The position of Her Majesty's Government is clear that the UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-12/1126>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Shireen Abu Akleh**

**David Jones (Conservative)** [2402] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations she has made to her

Israeli counterpart on the violence at the funeral of Shireen Abu Akleh.

**Claire Hanna (SDLP)** [2697] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the (a) fatal shooting of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in the West Bank and (b) attack on pallbearers as they carried her coffin; and what steps the Government is taking in response to these events.

**Amanda Milling:** On 11 May, I publicly expressed my sadness upon hearing news of the tragic death of veteran Palestinian Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh, and called for a thorough investigation. The Foreign Secretary also made this clear in a statement on 12 May. We were also deeply disturbed by the scenes in Jerusalem at her funeral. Her death was a tragedy and those mourning must be treated with respect and dignity. We call for urgent steps to de-escalate tensions and for restraint in the use of force. The UK Ambassador to Israel has reiterated the importance of an investigation with the Israeli authorities. The safety of journalists across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-16/2402>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-16/2697>

*The statements referred to above can be read at*

<https://twitter.com/amandamilling/status/1524396468370653184>

and

<https://twitter.com/trussliz/status/1524648916012220417>

### **Israel: Journalism**

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [2641] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Israeli Government on its treatment of journalists.

**Amanda Milling:** The UK is committed to the protection of media freedom around the world. The safety of journalists across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work. During a call with the Israeli Ambassador on 19 May, I made clear the UK's sadness at the recent death of Shireen Abu Aqleh whilst working in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. I also urged a thorough and transparent investigation and pushed for action to safeguard the work of journalists.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-16/2641>

## **British Consulate-General Jerusalem**

### **Call for bids: Promoting societal links between Gaza and the West Bank**

The British Consulate General, Jerusalem ... is accepting proposals for a three-year project ... to build links between Gaza and the West Bank including through creative, tangible and sustainable joint initiatives. Gaza and the West Bank are becoming more and more divided not only politically, but also legislatively due to the introduction of laws which are only applied in Gaza or the West Bank and socially thanks to declining travel and contact between the West Bank and Gaza. ... The project will help to forge links between different parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, links which would support future efforts to create a sovereign, independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State living in peace and security side by side with Israel based on 1967 borders ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-for-bids-promoting-societal-links-between-gaza-and-the-west-bank>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

**Pauline McNeill (Labour) [S6M-04425] Remembering Shireen Abu Akleh** – That the Parliament notes with deep regret the reported death of the respected journalist, Shireen Abu Akleh, after being shot in the head while reporting; understands that Ms Abu Akleh was a Palestinian-American journalist who worked for 25 years as a reporter for Al Jazeera, and was a household name across the Middle East for her many years reporting from the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories; believes that an independent inquiry into her death must be carried out in light of conflicting accounts of the circumstances of her death; understands that the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese, said in an interview that her death constitutes a "serious violation of international humanitarian law and is potentially a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court", and expresses its sympathy to Ms Abu Akleh's family and all who knew her.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-04425>

TOP

## Other Relevant Information

### Council of Europe

#### **Council of Europe proposes a comprehensive legal and policy framework to combat hate speech**

... In a Recommendation adopted during its annual session ... the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers calls on governments to develop comprehensive strategies to prevent and fight hate speech, including the adoption of an effective legal framework and implementing adequately calibrated and proportionate measures. When doing so, national authorities should carefully balance the right to private life, the right to freedom of expression and the prohibition of discrimination. ...

The guidelines recommend that member states differentiate between, firstly, the most serious cases of hate speech, which are to be prohibited by criminal law, secondly, hate speech subject to civil and administrative law and, finally, offensive or harmful types of expressions which are not sufficiently severe to be legitimately restricted under the European Convention on Human Rights but nevertheless call for alternative responses.

Guidance is offered concerning awareness-raising, education, the use of counter and alternative speech, the setting up of support mechanisms to help those targeted by hate speech and training for members of the police and the judiciary as well as other professionals. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/council-of-europe-proposes-a-comprehensive-legal-and-policy-framework-to-combat-hate-speech>

#### **Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech**

[https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a67955](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a67955)

TOP

## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

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

#### **Online Safety Bill**

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

#### **Schools Bill**

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

TOP

## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

#### **Independent Review of Social Cohesion and Resilience** (closing date 2 June 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence>

#### **Public Participation at the Scottish Parliament** (closing date 30 June 2022)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/cppp/participation-2022/>

TOP

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