



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Welsh Government

**An initial assessment of the Further Education sector's contribution to the Welsh Government's Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan**

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-07/anti-racism-in-the-fe-sector-in-wales-scoping-study.pdf>

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## Holocaust

### House of Lords Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Poland: Holocaust**

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL1378] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, during their chairmanship of the 2024 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, to call on Poland (1) to honour its commitment to the democratic principle of property rights, and (2) to resolve the claims of those whose property was stolen in Poland during the Holocaust.

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL1379] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, during their chairmanship of the 2024 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, to prioritise the case for Poland to set up a scheme (1) to make restitution of, and (2) to commemorate, private property stolen during the Holocaust.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an important intergovernmental organisation uniting governments and experts to strengthen Holocaust remembrance. The UK is still considering the focus of its chairmanship in 2024. IHRA's remit does not include property restitution. The UK continues to meet its commitments under the Terezín declaration. The UK has raised concerns with the Polish Government about legislation introduced last

year on property restitution. The UK's Special Envoy for post-Holocaust issues, Lord Pickles, has followed developments closely and, through the British Embassy in Warsaw, we have been acting in consultation with our likeminded partners to engage with the Polish Government. Following the passage of the legislation, which the UK Government judges will have a negative effect on legitimate claimants, the then Minister for Europe (Wendy Morton) publicly expressed her disappointment and called for legal avenues for claims to remain open. Lord Pickles will chair a discussion on restitution at the Terezín Declaration Conference on the 3rd of November 2022. Working with like-minded partners and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation (WJRO), FCDO will continue to urge Poland to fairly, objectively and sensitively deal with Holocaust-era property restitution.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-30/hl1378>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-30/hl1379>

*The Terezin Declaration, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.lootedartcommission.com/NPNMG484641>

*Information about the conference referred to above can be read at*

[https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/foreign\\_relations/terezin\\_declaration/index.html](https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/foreign_relations/terezin_declaration/index.html)

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL1348] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning reports that several family members in Jenin were used as human shields by Israeli forces on 13 May.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the need to protect children. We also regularly raise the importance of the Israeli security force's adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-29/hl1348>

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL1349] To ask Her Majesty's Government, what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding reports of Israeli authorities not intervening when Mr Ali Hasan Harb was attacked in the West Bank by an Israeli settler.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of this case and are monitoring closely. The UK regularly raises the issue of settler violence with the Government of Israel. We welcome discussion by the Israeli authorities on how to address this issue, and urge Israel to bring those responsible to justice. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-29/hl1349>

### UN experts urge Israel to free Ahmad Manasra

UN human rights experts ... urged the Government of Israel to immediately release Ahmad Manasra, a 20-year-old Palestinian detained in Israeli prisons since he was 14 years old, while suffering serious mental health conditions.

“Ahmad’s imprisonment for almost six years has deprived him of childhood, family environment, protection, and all the rights he should have been guaranteed as a child,” ... “This case is haunting in many respects and his continuous detention, despite his deteriorating mental conditions, is a stain on all of us as part of the international human rights community”.

In 2015, then 13-year-old Ahmad Manasra and his 15-year-old cousin were accused of stabbing two Israelis in the Pisgat Ze’ev settlement in the occupied West Bank. His cousin was shot dead at the scene, whereas Ahmad was hit by a car and sustained serious head injuries while an Israeli crowd jeered at him. Following his arrest, video footage, widely circulated on media, showed young, distressed Ahmad being harshly treated and severely interrogated without the presence of his parents or legal representative.

“The gut-wrenching scenes of a child with broken bones laying on the ground under a barrage of insults and threats shouted by armed adults in a foreign language; of that very same boy being spoon-fed by unfamiliar hands while chained to a hospital bed and then violently interrogated in breach of human rights norms and principles concerning arrest and detention of a child, continue to haunt our conscience,” the experts said.

“To Ahmad we say, we regret we failed to protect you”.

After he had turned 14 years old in 2016, Ahmad was convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to 12 years in prison, although the law at the time when the crime was allegedly committed in 2015 did not permit imprisonment of minors under the age of 14. The sentence was later reduced to nine and a half years. ...

In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child must be a primary consideration,” the experts said. “In violation of this fundamental principle, the overriding consideration in this case appeared to be Israel’s focus on containing whoever they label as terrorism threats”, they said.

Despite Ahmad’s aggravated mental conditions, Israeli authorities have rejected requests by Ahmad’s lawyers for his early release. ...

“As repeatedly reiterated to Israeli authorities, its ill-defined and overly broad Counter-Terrorism Law has led to far too many instances of arbitrariness and abuse. Ahmad’s case is yet another morally and legally unjustifiable consequence of the Law. ...

“Solitary confinement of a child for such a prolonged period may amount to torture, prohibited in all circumstances under international human rights law,” said the experts. ...

“Ahmad’s case provides clear evidence of Israel’s deliberate practices of subjecting Palestinians, including children, to arbitrary detention, torture and inhumane treatment, often disguised as a ‘legitimate’ counter-terrorism response,” said the experts. The case also raises serious concerns of possible violations of international fair trial standards applicable to children, including the prohibition of inducing through coercion a child to a confession or self-incriminatory testimony. ...

“Israel, as the occupying power, is prohibited from detaining protected persons accused of offences in its own territory,” they said. “This practice violates article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and may also amount to forcible transfer, which constitutes a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is also recognised as a war crime under Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.” ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/07/un-experts-urge-israel-free-ahmad-manasra>

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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>

#### **\*\* Online Safety Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0121/amend/onlinesafety\\_rm\\_rep\\_0715.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0121/amend/onlinesafety_rm_rep_0715.pdf)

#### **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>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/47451/documents/2163>

Petitions opposing sections of the Bill that relate to home-educated children

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-07-14/debates/2207146000019/SchoolsBill>

### 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 in 7 days**

**Public Participation at the Scottish Parliament** (closing date 22 July 2022)

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

**Standards for ethnicity data** (closing date 30 August 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/standards-for-ethnicity-data>

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

<https://tinyurl.com/mpunv6cw>

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