



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### **Food Supply: Northern Ireland**

**The Lord Bishop of Manchester** [HL1742] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure an (1) adequate, and (2) diverse, supply of food for those of (a) Orthodox Jewish faith, and (b) other faiths, in Northern Ireland.

**Lord Benyon:** We recognise the importance of ensuring that everyone in Northern Ireland is able to observe their chosen faith fully, and without hindrance. This includes those of Orthodox Jewish faith, who rely on free access to kosher meats and groceries.

We have previously been made aware that a supplier decided to stop supplying kosher foods to Northern Ireland. They explained that this was owing to difficulty for them complying with the Official Controls Regulation which applies in Northern Ireland by virtue of the Northern Ireland Protocol.

We worked closely with those concerned to identify alternative options, and an alternative GB supplier of kosher foods was identified.

We are not aware of any similar issues facing those of other faiths in Northern Ireland, but we do know that the Protocol is still causing real problems. It is our preference to resolve these problems through talks with the EU, but in the meantime the Government's Northern Ireland Protocol Bill will fix the practical problems that the Protocol has created.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-07-13/hl1742>

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# Holocaust

## Council of Europe

### **European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day: Statement by Council of Europe Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić**

Today, we commemorate European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day and pay tribute to the thousands of victims.

78 years ago, on 2 August 1944, 3,000 Roma - mainly women and children - were brutally murdered in the dark of the night at Auschwitz-Birkenau. This terrible event is central to the story of the Roma Holocaust where hatred, exploitation and stigmatisation were milestones on the road to mass killing. Remembrance remains fundamental to honouring the victims and to ensuring that such crimes are not repeated.

Today, Roma communities still face antigypsyism in many parts of our continent. This is a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority and which manifests itself in various and insidious guises.

The Council of Europe remains committed and active in the fight against discrimination, racism and antigypsyism. ...

... the Council of Europe will continue to ensure remembrance and help every current and future generation to learn from the past. More than that, we are committed to ensuring that Roma people receive the respect and dignity to which everyone is entitled, now and always.

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/european-roma-holocaust-memorial-day-statement-by-council-of-europe-secretary-general-marija-pejcinovic-buric>

## Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

### **Remembering the Roma genocide goes beyond commemoration to fight today's intolerance, OSCE human rights head says**

Governments need to go beyond their responsibility to remember the Roma and Sinti genocide of 1944 to ensure that school curricula and other educational initiatives engage with young people to discuss the potentially dangerous consequences of racist ideologies, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) said on today's Roma Genocide Remembrance Day.

"It is unacceptable that Roma and Sinti communities are continuing to suffer so desperately from intolerance, systemic racism and discrimination wherever they live," said ODIHR Director Matteo Mecacci. "Learning the essential lessons from the history of the Roma genocide means to redouble our efforts to combat prejudice, bias, and racism against Roma and Sinti in the here and now."

2 August marks the anniversary of the massacre of 4,300 Sinti and Roma in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. ...

The joint [Roma Genocide website](#) set up by ODIHR and the Council of Europe is a source of knowledge and information for governments, public institutions, universities, schools, and civil society. ODIHR also cooperates with organizations including the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#) (IHRA) to help ensure greater effectiveness in strengthening Holocaust education, remembrance and research worldwide. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/523509>

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## Department for International Trade

### **Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Israel**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1095110/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-01.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1095110/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-01.pdf)

### **Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1095031/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-01.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1095031/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-01.pdf)

## UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

### **Israel: Criminalisation and harassment of human rights defenders in Masafer Yatta must end, say UN experts**

UN experts today denounced Israel's harassment of human rights defenders and humanitarian workers in the occupied West Bank hamlets of Masafer Yatta, as its communities continue to be threatened by risks of forcible transfer, including mass forced evictions and arbitrary displacement.

"Legitimised by the High Court decision, which abysmally found no reason to stop the implementation of illegitimate eviction orders, Israeli authorities have already demolished numerous Palestinian homes and structures, forcibly evicting and arbitrarily displacing residents from their homes in Masafer Yatta," the experts said.

The UN experts earlier [denounced](#) in May 2022 the Israeli High Court of Justice rejection of appeals against eviction orders issued to Palestinian inhabitants of Masafer Yatta, designated as a military training site. ...

"The tragic implications of that decision are now before our eyes: roughly 1,200 Palestinian residents in Masafer Yatta are left defenceless in front of the threat of forced eviction and arbitrary displacement. ...

The experts also expressed dismay at reports that human rights defenders and humanitarian workers have been harassed by the Israeli military in Masafer Yatta. ...

"Israeli authorities' hubris is proving without limits. They are even harassing human rights defenders and humanitarian workers seeking to support and protect people facing grave human rights violations in Masafer Yatta," the experts said.

"This is a direct assault on the core of human rights and international humanitarian law, and a serious violation of the right of human rights defenders to engage in their work. This also confirms that impunity over abuse of power fosters power to abuse." ...

"Settlements are flagrantly illegal," the experts said. "They are reminiscent of a past that the world of free nations worked to bury once and for all, and Israel keeps on revising. By design, they're an instrument of oppression of the Palestinians." ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/08/israel-criminalisation-and-harassment-human-rights-defenders-masafer-yatta>

### **UN Committee against Torture publishes findings on Botswana, Nicaragua, State of Palestine and the United Arab Emirates**

... State of Palestine

The Committee was seriously concerned about the casualties caused by the excessive use of force, particularly the use of lethal weapons by security forces and unidentified armed elements during demonstrations on the postponement of national elections in April

2021 and about Nizar Banat's death in custody in June 2021. It requested that the State of Palestine effectively investigate all allegations relating to the excessive use of force and ensure that all perpetrators are prosecuted and victims are fully compensated. It also recommended that the State party guarantee that all officers can be effectively identified at all times to ensure individual accountability.

Regarding consistent reports that people in custody in facilities run by security forces and intelligence services in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are tortured or ill-treated, particularly during the investigation stage of proceedings, the Committee urged the State party to conduct prompt and effective investigations into complaints involving public officials. It also asked the State party to prosecute torturers and punish them with appropriate penalties. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/07/un-committee-against-torture-publishes-findings-botswana-nicaragua-state>

**Committee against Torture: Concluding observations on the initial report of the State of Palestine**

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/PSE/CAT\\_C\\_PSE\\_CO\\_1\\_49331\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/PSE/CAT_C_PSE_CO_1_49331_E.pdf)

## CAGE

**Understanding Ukraine and Palestine solidarity in UK Schools**

<https://www.cage.ngo/cage-briefing-understanding-ukraine-and-palestine-solidarity-in-uk-schools>

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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

### **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>

### **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