



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Results of the 2022 FSA Slaughter Sector Survey in England and Wales

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1096782/Results-of-the-2022-FSA-Slaughter-Sector-Survey-in-England-and-Wales.pdf

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Israel

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Urging all parties to ensure the ceasefire in Gaza is durable and prevents further violence: UK statement to UN Security Council by Ambassador James Kariuki at the Security Council briefing on the situation in Gaza

... The United Kingdom joins fellow Council Members in welcoming the ceasefire in Gaza announced last night. We express our thanks to Egypt, Qatar and the office of UN Special Coordinator, Tor Wennesland, for their mediation efforts. We now urge all parties to do their utmost to ensure the ceasefire is durable and prevents further violence. ...

We strongly condemn the firing of over 1,100 rockets at civilians by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the ongoing campaign of terror attacks by the group, which has resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians, Israelis and Palestinians alike.

As my Foreign Secretary has been clear, the UK stands by Israel and its right to defend itself in the face of such terrorism and violence.

The United Kingdom expresses its deepest condolences to the families of innocent Palestinian civilians killed over the past three days, particularly the tragic deaths of children. The UK supports a timely and thorough investigation into all of these reports. ...

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including lack of movement and access, damage to civilian infrastructure, and critical supplies, such as fuel

for power plants to supply electricity, including for hospitals. We welcome Israel's announcement that it is allowing humanitarian aid through to Gaza. ...

This escalation is yet another reminder of the urgent need for progress towards a Two State solution that ensures a safe and secure Israel, living alongside a Palestinian state based on 1967 lines, with Jerusalem the shared capital of both states.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/urging-all-parties-to-ensure-the-ceasefire-in-gaza-is-durable-and-prevents-further-violence-uk-statement-to-un-security-council>

Updated travel advice: Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel>

Updated travel advice: Occupied Palestinian Territories

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

United Nations

Welcoming Ceasefire in Gaza, Israel, Secretary-General Stresses Only Political Solution Will Lead to Peaceful Future for Palestinians, Israelis Alike

... The Secretary-General welcomes the announcement of a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel. He is deeply saddened by the loss of life and injuries, including children, from airstrikes in Gaza and the indiscriminate firing of rockets toward Israel from population centres in Gaza by Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other militant groups. He extends his deepest condolences to the victims of the violence and their loved ones.

The hostilities have contributed to a humanitarian emergency. Crossings into Gaza have been closed and power shortages are affecting essential facilities and supplies. Hundreds of buildings and homes have been destroyed or damaged, leaving thousands of Palestinians homeless.

The Secretary-General commends Egypt for its efforts carried out, in close coordination with the United Nations, to help restore calm. The Secretary-General calls on all sides to observe the ceasefire.

He reaffirms the United Nations' commitment to the achievement of the two-State solution based on relevant United Nations resolutions, international law, and prior agreements and the importance of restoring a political horizon. Only a negotiated sustainable political solution will end, once and for all, these devastating cycles of violence and lead to a peaceful future for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/sqsm21403.doc.htm>

Ceasefire Between Israel, Palestinian Militants 'Fragile', Middle East Coordinator Tells Security Council, Urging All Parties to Uphold Truce, Safeguard Past Gains

... **Tor Wennesland, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process**, said recent days have seen a "deeply worrying" escalation in the Gaza Strip between Israeli military forces and Palestinian armed groups, primarily Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Preliminary numbers, which have yet to be confirmed, indicate that from 5 August, the Israel Defense Forces launched 147 air strikes against targets in Gaza. Palestinian militants launched some 1,100 rockets and mortars into Israel, many of which landed deep inside Israel's territory. Forty-six Palestinians were killed and 360 injured, while hundreds of residences were damaged or destroyed. In turn, 70 Israelis were injured, with damage to residential and other civilian structures.

Following that, in separate statements, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Prime Minister of Israel announced that a ceasefire had been agreed ...

He explained that the most recent escalation has its roots in deeper tensions, which spiked across the West Bank in March and April after four terrorist attacks — the deadliest in years — took place inside Israel. Afterward, Israel increased military operations inside the occupied West Bank, notably in Jenin, focused on Palestinian military groups operating in the area. On 1 August, Israel arrested Bassem as-Saadi, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader, along with his son-in-law. A 17-year-old Palestinian, whom the group claimed as an affiliate, was killed during the operation.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad declared a “state of alert” and raised the level of readiness of its militants, he continued. In response, Israel closed the crossings between Israel and the Gaza strip on 2 August and restricted civilian movement in the so-called “Gaza envelope”. ... On 5 August, Israeli forces carried out air strikes against reported military targets, including a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad commander in Gaza, who was killed in the attack. Hours later, that group and other militant factions launched 100 indiscriminate rockets from within Gazan civilian neighbourhoods towards Tel Aviv, central Israel and “the Gaza envelope”. ...

He also reported that 1,100 rockets and mortars were fired by Palestinian armed groups, mainly Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s Al Quds Brigades — 20 per cent of which reportedly fell short within the Gaza Strip. Of those that crossed the border, most were intercepted by Israel’s “Iron Dome”, but some caused material damage. “I condemn the indiscriminate launching of rockets from highly populated residential neighbourhoods in Gaza into civilian population centres in Israel,” he said. While recognizing Israel’s legitimate security concerns, he said all use of force must be proportionate. ...

Recalling the “gradual but significant” progress was made following the May 2021 hostilities, he also underscored that “the ceasefire is fragile”. The cycles of violence will cease only once a political resolution is found that ends the occupation and allows for realizing a two-State solution on the basis of the 1967 lines. ...

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, asked how many more times Israel will get to justify bombing Palestinians in Gaza, how many more years Israel will get to impose its inhumane blockade on 2 million people and how many more Palestinian children must be buried until someone says: “Enough is enough.” Pointing out that there are two constant features of Israeli policy regardless of who is in power — bombing Gaza and advancing colonial settlements — he stressed that “Israel kills our people because it can”. He recalled the deaths of several Palestinian children, asking those present how he could convey these tragedies in such a way that the Council understands that those who need the organ’s support are defenceless Palestinian families, and not the nuclear occupying power. ...

Pointing out that the international community and the Council have already determined the outcome to which Palestinians aspire, he stressed that those present “are not bystanders praying for that outcome; you are actors who can decisively affect the outcome”. ... Peace is never reached by waiting and it must be achieved — whatever the price — because the cost of war will always be infinitely higher. ...

Gilad Erdan (Israel) said the debate must focus on the facts that a terror organization, attempting to murder Israeli civilians, also murdered innocent Palestinian civilians along the way. Israel defended itself, he said, recalling that Palestinian Islamic Jihad deliberately fired 1,100 rockets at Israeli civilians with roughly 200 landing inside the Gaza strip, killing innocent civilians, including children. “This is not an assessment. This is the hard truth and Israel has all the proof,” he said, adding that his delegation has video footage, radio evidence and mission logs proving that the tragic deaths of children in Gevalia were the result of Palestinian Islamic Jihad rockets.

The enemy that Israel faces is one willing to kill its own children while attempting to murder Israeli civilians and children, he continued, pointing out that Palestinian Islamic Jihad is armed, funded and trained by Iran. Israel carried out its operation, taking precautions hardly ever seen in areas of conflict, and aimed at targeting only Palestinian Islamic Jihad

terrorists and no one else. He also recalled that, 17 years ago to this day, Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip, dismantling dozens of Israeli villages and uprooting its citizens. Despite that goodwill, Palestinians chose Hamas over progress and prosperity, he said, adding that Hamas is currently holding two Israelis with special needs hostage. Israel acted only against the terrorists of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, not against the people of Gaza, Hamas or the Palestinian authorities, he stressed.

Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalek Mahmoud (Egypt), recalling his country's warning that conditions in Gaza could again spiral into violence, pointed out that the latest escalation occurred before Gaza could recover from the last one. Israel allowed settlers, under police protection, to enter the Aqsa Mosque compound, provoking Muslims and violating the legal and historical position of the holy site. Egypt then took the initiative to mediate between Palestinian and Israeli groups in Gaza. ...

He also cited violations by Israel in the West Bank, marked by arrests, settlement-expansion and use of live ammunition. He called for a halt to Israel's settlement-expansion and a lifting of the Gaza blockade. Israel must also facilitate the delivery of goods and services into Gaza, he said, more broadly calling for funding for the area's reconstruction. The legal and historic status of East Jerusalem holy sites under Jordan's custodianship must be respected, as well. He urged all parties to halt the targeting of civilians, underscoring the responsibility of any party whose actions lead to the death of civilians. ...

Nathalie Broadhurst Estival (France) expressed concern over the recent escalation, which resulted in many Palestinian civilian victims. ... There can be no lasting stability in Gaza without the return of the Palestinian Authority, the lifting of the blockade and credible security guarantees for Israel. ... she emphasized that both Israelis and Palestinians have the right to live in peace, dignity and security. ...

Cáit Moran (Ireland), welcoming the ceasefire announced on 7 August, called on all parties to ensure that it remains in force. The impact of Israeli strikes on civilians in the Gaza Strip is unacceptable, as are attacks against Israeli citizens. ... She also emphasized that, without addressing the root causes of conflict, further violence is inevitable, and the threat of extremism will remain. "This ceasefire must not become a pause between cycles of violence," she stressed ...

Linda Thomas-Greenfield (United States) called on all parties to implement the ceasefire, including through the consistent delivery of fuel shipments to Gaza. Civilian casualties should be "swiftly and thoroughly" investigated, she said, recalling that Israel was originally blamed for an attack on Jabalia refugee camp, which now appears to have been caused by a Palestinian Islamic Jihad rocket. She expressed full support for Israel's right to defend its people against terrorist threats, including rocket fire aimed at or without regard for civilians. ... Stressing that Palestinian Islamic Jihad is a designated terrorist group in the United States and other nations, she said it is also an Iran proxy group. It was "telling" that its leaders were in Tehran, while the people they claimed to be protecting were left in harm's way, she noted, adding that Palestinian Islamic Jihad — not Israel — held up the ceasefire accord, callously prolonging the hostilities. ...

Vassily A. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) ... called on all involved to show restraint, uphold the norms of international humanitarian law and avoid new escalation. While this latest deterioration was caused by a host of factors, chief among them is the absence of a direct negotiating process between Palestinians and Israelis. ...

James Kariuki (United Kingdom) urged all parties to ensure that the ceasefire in Gaza is durable and prevents further violence. Condemning the firing of over 1,100 rockets at civilians by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, he said that his country stands by Israel and its right to defend itself in the face of such terrorism and violence. ...

Further, the humanitarian situation in Gaza is concerning ... and he welcomed Israel's announcement that it is allowing humanitarian aid to enter Gaza. ... [[Click here](#) to read this speech in greater detail]

Mahmoud Daifallah Hmoud (Jordan), speaking for the Arab Group, welcomed the truce that halted Israel's aggression against Gaza, citing Egypt's pivotal role in instilling stability, along with Qatar and the United States. He commended Jordan's continuous efforts to protect the legal and historical status of Islamic and Christian sites, and in addressing Israel's actions that affect the identities of those sites. Israel's aggression against Gaza, which caused the violence, reflects the absence of the basic two-State solution. He described the targeting of Palestinian children, homes and civilian infrastructure as "deplorable" and called on the international community to end Israel's contempt for international humanitarian law and to investigate all violations against civilians. ...

Noting that Israel is obliged to protect Palestinians, he condemned Israel's violations against the Aqsa Mosque compound, which is an exclusively Muslim place of worship. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14994.doc.htm>

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Foreign Affairs

Scottish Parliament Motion

John Mason (SNP) [S6M-05464] Freedom of Religion or Belief Conference – That the Parliament notes that the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), which was hosted by the UK Government, took place in London on 5 and 6 July 2022; understands that around 700 delegates from over 100 countries attended, representing governments, parliaments, faith groups, and other parts of civil society; believes that delegates were impressed by the first-hand accounts of speakers from North Korea, Eritrea, from Baha'i and Ahmadiyya communities, and others who, it understands, have been persecuted for their faith; understands that themes discussed included an urgency to tackle the early warning signs of FoRB violations by governments, concerns over the use of technology as a tool for FoRB infringement, and the impact of intersecting inequalities, for example, for Yazidi women; believes that this conference has helped raise the profile of freedom of religion or belief as an issue, and considers that if freedom of religion or belief is lost, other freedoms will inevitably be lost as well.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-05464>

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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