



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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The Charity Commission

Regulator removes trustees and charity is wound up after trustee attempted to avoid business rates

The Commission has removed Achiezer from the register of charities, and removed two of the charity's trustees. The regulator found serious misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of the charity due to poor financial management and governance.

The Commission's inquiry found that the charity had made payments totalling £129,800 to Dasim Partners, a property development company of which two trustees, Sidney and David Chontow, were partners.

The inquiry concluded that the trustees had not managed the conflicts of interest, as there were no independent trustees, and the basis of these payments was unclear.

The regulator also concluded that one of the trustees, Sidney Chontow, had obtained personal benefit. ...

The inquiry also found that the trustees failed to properly manage the charity's funds and did not distinguish between the charity and other entities with which they were connected.

The trustees did not effectively manage conflicts of interest, allowing numerous complex transactions to be made to related organisations and their personal companies. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-removes-trustees-and-charity-is-wound-up-after-trustee-attempted-to-avoid-business-rates>

Decision: Charity Inquiry: Achiezer

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-inquiry-achiezer/charity-inquiry-achiezer>

Entry in List of Removed Charities

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/234038/governance>

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Israel

Department for International Trade

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Israel

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098382/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-19.pdf

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1098436/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2022-08-19.pdf

United Nations

Statement by UN Agencies and the Association of International Development Agencies working in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

This morning, Israeli Forces broke into, searched and sealed the offices of seven Palestinian human rights and humanitarian organizations in Ramallah in Area A of the occupied West Bank. Their property was confiscated and destroyed and military orders closing the offices were left at the premises.

The United Nations and its partners take seriously allegations of funding terrorism and the Israeli designations of these organizations as “terror organizations” and/or “unlawful”. Despite offers to review the allegations to determine if funds have been diverted, Israeli authorities have not given any compelling evidence to the United Nations Agencies nor its NGO partners working in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to support these designations. Several Member States recently announced that the evidence which was shared with them does not justify the designations.

The attempted closures of these organization offices represent the latest in a series of actions by Israel that are further limiting the ability of human rights, humanitarian and development work in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which affect all institutions working to promote human rights, development and delivering assistance.

We reiterate our November 2021 statement: counter-terrorism legislation must be in accordance with obligations under international law, in particular, international humanitarian law and human rights law, which include full respect for the rights to freedom of association and expression. It cannot be applied to legitimate human rights and humanitarian work; the breadth of the Israeli 2016 Anti-Terrorism legislation and its impact on the presumption of innocence present serious concerns under international law.

We urge the Government of Israel to refrain from any action that would prevent these organizations from continuing their critical human rights, humanitarian and development work in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

<https://palestine.un.org/en/195567-statement-un-agencies-and-association-international-development-agencies-working-occupied>

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Other Relevant Information

University of Cambridge

Racial discrimination linked to increased risk of premature babies

Women who experience racial discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity, race or

nationality are at increased risk of giving birth prematurely, according to a team led by researchers at the University of Cambridge.

The findings add to growing evidence that racial discrimination is a risk factor for poor health outcomes, say the researchers.

For several decades, race has been recognised as a social determinant of health and a risk factor for numerous diseases. The evidence increasingly suggests that social, environmental, economic and political factors are fundamental drivers of health inequities, and that it is often racial discrimination or racism, rather than race, that is the root cause of racial disparities in health outcomes. ...

To explore the existing patterns of racial discrimination and adverse pregnancy outcomes, the researchers carried out a systematic review and meta-analysis ... [that] showed that the experience of racial discrimination was significantly associated with increased risk of premature birth. Women who experienced racial discrimination were 40% more likely to give birth prematurely. When low quality studies were excluded, the odds of a premature birth were reduced, but still 31% higher in those experiencing racial discrimination.

While not statistically significant, the results also suggest that the experience of racial discrimination may increase the chance of giving birth to a small-for-gestational age baby by 23%. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/racial-discrimination-linked-to-increased-risk-of-premature-babies>

Racial discrimination and adverse pregnancy outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis

<https://gh.bmj.com/content/bmjgh/7/8/e009227.full.pdf>

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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