



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Israel

Department for Transport

Boost for UK economy and rail industry through new Israel partnership

... Fresh business opportunities and potential new jobs will be unlocked for the UK's rail industry thanks to a new partnership signed by the Transport Secretary with Israel ...

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed by the two countries to share expertise on large scale rail projects, following the successful launch of the UK's Elizabeth Line earlier this year. ...

It is now hoped business opportunities with Israel, the UK's third biggest transport goods trading partner, will not only enable firms to share valuable expertise, but boost economic growth and could lead to more jobs being created.

In July, the UK launched negotiations with Israel to upgrade the current trade deal, currently worth £5 billion and supports 6,600 UK businesses. The upgraded agreement would establish a modern, revamped trading relationship between two of the world's services superpowers. ...

In 2021 alone, the UK imported £144 million of transportation services from Israel, highlighting the close relationship between our two nations.

As part of the Transport Secretary's visit to Israel this week, he has visited the building site of Tel Aviv's new light rail line and will meet with the Israeli Transport Minister Merav Michaeli.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said: Today's partnership further ingrains our commitment to a global Britain, helping our world-leading rail industry to extend its expertise to friends overseas ...

Minister of Transport and Road Safety, Merav Michaeli: Transport is a national security issue. This is accepted and understood around the world, and I am happy to strengthen ties and enter into agreements with other countries that make Israel stronger. ...

I am confident that the know-how we have shared and the agreements we have signed will result in better transportation in both countries, and particularly greener, shared transport that the world needs so much as we face the climate crisis. ...

The new memorandum will allow both countries to share experience and best practice in relation to large-scale transport projects. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/boost-for-uk-economy-and-rail-industry-through-new-israel-partnership>

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP We're partnering with Israel to spread the success of the #ElizabethLine overseas. Through this we can share our expertise and boost business opportunities.

[includes video]

<https://twitter.com/grantshapps/status/1562438152324755458>

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP Today I've signed a partnership with my Israeli counterpart @MeravMichaeli together with our team from @Crossrail International to share expertise on rail projects as #Israel builds out their £33bn Tel Aviv metro.

<https://twitter.com/grantshapps/status/1562356058919665665>

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Other Relevant Information

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Places of worship must be kept safe and accessible in times of peace and in conflict, OSCE human rights head says

Establishing, maintaining, and accessing places and objects of worship or contemplation are crucial to the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, which applies during conflict and in times of peace, said the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion.

“The OSCE region has a rich cultural and religious heritage, but religious buildings and relics are not just objects of the past — they’re profoundly important for living communities today,” said ODIHR Director Matteo Mecacci. “Attacks on places of worship go against both the letter and spirit of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief. They must be protected to ensure communities know that their past is respected, and their future is safe.”

ODIHR’s most recent hate crime data [reveals](#) that 51% of all incidents reported to the Office were anti-religious hate crimes. Most of these crimes targeted property, such as mosques, synagogues, churches, and cemeteries, though it is widely accepted that the vast majority of hate crimes are never reported to the state authorities or to anyone else. UN figures also show that 175 cultural heritage sites in Ukraine have been damaged since 24 February 2022, of which 74 are religious sites.

Hatred and intolerance against people from particular religious communities rarely take place in isolation, but go together with other human rights violations. ...

The harm can also be less obvious, with peaceful religious or belief communities struggling in some OSCE countries to register their religious buildings or facing mandatory registration systems, insurmountable bureaucracy, or arbitrary closure and confiscation of their property. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/524394>

United Nations

Secretary-General Urges Doing More to Examine Conditions that Drive Hate, in Message for Day Commemorating Victims of Religion-Based Violence

... On this day, we honour those who have lost their lives or who have otherwise suffered for simply seeking to exercise their fundamental rights to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief. ...

... persons and communities worldwide continue to face intolerance and violence based on religion or belief. Hate speech, online or offline, continues to fuel violence against vulnerable members of society, including ethnic and religious minorities. We must do more to support victims and examine the conditions that drive intolerance and hate. ... States have the responsibility to prevent and address discrimination and violence inflicted in the name of religion or belief through comprehensive policies that promote inclusion, diversity, tolerance and interfaith and intercultural dialogue. Human rights violations perpetrated in the name of religion or belief must be investigated and punished, and effective reparations need to be provided to victims, in compliance with international human rights law.

It is essential that all States, faith leaders and other influential actors condemn all incitement to hatred and violence based on religion or belief. Only a collective, inclusive, and society-wide effort can result in safe coexistence for all and end this blight on our societies.

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/sqsm21417.doc.htm>

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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

**** closes in 6 days**

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