



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Islamophobia

John Howell (Conservative) [64004] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the debate entitled Raising Awareness of and countering Islamophobia, which took place at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 11 October 2022.

Paul Scully: The UK is an open, tolerant and welcoming country where Muslims practice their faith in freedom. We recognise the huge contribution British Muslims make to public life and we are committed to celebrating and promoting this. However we are not complacent. This Government takes hate crime very seriously and will not tolerate Anti-Muslim hatred in any form, seeking to stamp it out wherever it occurs. For those who do suffer discrimination and hate, we have some of the strongest legislation in the world to tackle hate crime. We have supported Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) with just over £4 million between 2016 and 2022 to monitor and combat Anti-Muslim hatred and support victims.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-17/64004>

A transcript of the debate referred to above can be read at

<https://pace.coe.int/en/verbatim/2022-10-11/pm/en#theme-1389>

The Resolution approved following the debate referred to above can be read at

<https://pace.coe.int/en/files/31338/html>

Religious Hatred: Hinduism

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [67239] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions he has had with his officials on tackling Hinduphobia.

Paul Scully: There is no place in our country for hatred towards Hindus and we will seek to stamp it out wherever it occurs. We have some of the strongest legislation in the world to tackle hate crime and we encourage those who have experienced hatred to come forward to the Police or to report to the Police online portal True Vision.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-19/67239>

The portal referred to above is available at
[https://www.report-it.org.uk/your police force](https://www.report-it.org.uk/your_police_force)

The following two questions both received the same answer

Higher Education: Racial Discrimination

Cat Smith (Labour) [65853] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on tackling institutional racism in higher education institutions.

Cat Smith (Labour) [65854] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the level of institutional racism in UK universities.

Andrea Jenkyns: Any form of racism is abhorrent and unacceptable anywhere, including in higher education (HE). HE providers are autonomous institutions with clear responsibilities. Under the Equality Act 2010, they should have robust policies and procedures in place to comply with the law in investigating and swiftly addressing reports of racism.

The department is clear that HE providers should be proactive in confronting and preventing racism, ensuring campuses are safe, welcoming environments for students of all races and backgrounds, and empowering those students to feel confident in reporting issues. The 2020 Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report found that most students from ethnic minority groups do relatively well in accessing and completing HE.

However, the department continues to work with universities, sector organisations, student organisations, and the regulator to drive racism out of HE institutions.

The Office for Students (OfS) has published data showing that black students are less likely than white students to achieve a first or 2.1 degree. The department notes that the OfS will be tracking this further as part of its range of new performance indicators.

The department is in regular contact with other government departments, such as the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, to align activity and ensure effective practice in prevention and victim support is shared widely.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-18/65853>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-18/65854>

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Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answer

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Expenditure

Lisa Nandy (Labour) 66975] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the expected annual spend is of the (a) Building Safety Programme ACM Remediation, (b) Levelling Up Fund, (c) UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, (d) Planning Reform programme, (e) Grenfell Site and Programme, (f) Housing Infrastructure Fund, (g) Building Safety Programme - Non ACM Remediation, (h) Towns Fund, (i) Freeports programme, (j) Electoral Integrity programme in each of the financial years from 2022-23 until the end year of each programme or project, providing resource and capital spending.

Dehenna Davison: The table below sets out the expected annual spend for each

of the programmes listed:

Programme	Resource Budgets £m by financial year			Capital Budgets £m by financial year		
	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Building Safety Programme ACM Remediation	0	0	0	58.6	9.4	0
Levelling Up Fund	20	25	20	413	1,213.00	1,120.00
Planning Reform Programme	10.9	50.4	69.3	0	3	2.5
Grenfell Site Management and Memorial Commission	7.3	7.5	5.3	18.7	26.6	20
Housing Infrastructure Fund	11.5	8	4	969.1	1,206.00	943.6
Building Safety Programme- Non ACM Remediation	18.1	34.8	31.9	839.8	945	1,050.00
Towns Fund	38.6	31.8	21.8	532	937	361.2
Freeports	7.3	7.2	4.9	68.5	93.5	51.5
Electoral Integrity Programme	16	40	40	0	0	0

Expected costs for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will be published in due course in line with the Government Major Projects Portfolio reporting process.

The future years data covers the remainder of the SR period. These figures are indicative and may be revised as part of the normal business planning process. Several programmes extend beyond 2024/25 into future Spending Reviews and funding for the remaining years will be settled as part of future fiscal events.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-19/66975>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Occupied Territories: Refugees

Sarah Champion (Labour) [67036] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2022 to Question 59761 on Occupied Territories: Refugees, if he will publish the search terms that will identify that information on DevTracker relating to financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Gillian Keegan: The data for UK contributions to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) during financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23 are available through the following links.

Supporting Palestinian refugees across the Middle East - in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria: DevTracker Programme GB-1-204546 (fcdo.gov.uk) – <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204546/summary>

UK Support to Palestinian Refugees (UKSPR) 2022-2025: DevTracker Programme

GB-GOV-1-301283 (fcdo.gov.uk)

<https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-301283/summary>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-19/67036>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-10/59761>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and The Lancet

COVID-19 and the gendered impacts on adolescent wellbeing: Evidence from a cross-sectional study of locally adapted measures in Ethiopia, Jordan, and Palestine

<https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2589-5370%2822%2900316-9>

United Nations

General Assembly: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security)

... **Benjamin Sharoni (Israel)** said that in the Middle East, conventional weapons were acquired in unprecedented quantities and qualities, and landed in the hands of oppressive regimes, terrorist organizations, and terrorist-sponsoring States. Underscoring the importance of compliance and implementation, he said that the International Tracing Instrument and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons were vital collective efforts in achieving a safer world. Israel provided its reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Programme of Action, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocol II. It had joined the Mine Ban Convention as an observer and instituted a moratorium on their export until July 2023. Regarding the open-ended working group on through-life ammunition management, future political commitments should respect legal systems, and ammunition management should be based on national norms and non-binding in nature. As an Arms Trade Treaty signatory State party, Israel had robust export control measures, which reflected the Treaty. In the Middle East, arms were deliberately transferred to non-State actors and terrorist-sponsoring States, which used civilians as human shields and perpetuated indiscriminate attacks. Combating their diversion to unauthorized recipients was of paramount importance. He commended the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as a unique forum and underlined the importance of a balance between military and humanitarian considerations. ...

Heidar Ali Balouji (Iran) ... raised the alarm regarding massive transfers and accumulations and unprecedented military spending, particularly by the United States. The Middle East was a worsening example: last year, Israel had spent \$24.3 billion on its military. The United States remained the biggest arms seller in the region. ...

Qais Kasabri, observer for the State of Palestine ... underlined that weapons of mass destruction pose an existential threat to humanity, but it is conventional weapons that kill most civilians around the world. The State of Palestine has acceded to all instruments relating to the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms conventions, and it is also a party to the Arms Trade Treaty. He noted that those commitments were made to end the suffering endured by the Palestinian people as a result of the use of illegal weapons and the unlawful use of conventional weapons by Israel and its armed settlers. ...

The representative of Israel ... speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he was compelled to take the floor following remarks made by the representatives of Iran and the Palestinian Authority, which Israel clearly rejected. Iran was attempting to gain regional dominance and spread its extremist ideology. It was the biggest proliferator of conventional

arms in the region and beyond, using proxy organizations to spreading terror, and engaging in hostilities. Iran was creating hubs with missile capabilities in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Iran was clearly working against the international community to bring about the collapse of arms control. Since its independence, Israel was threatened on a daily basis by terrorist organizations that sought its destruction. Perhaps the representative of the Palestinian Authority could have referred to the ways in which the Palestinian Authority could play a role in preventing arms from reaching the hands of terrorists that aimed to kill innocent Israelis.

The representative of Iran said he was compelled to take the floor to reject the allegations made by the Israeli representative against his country. His position remained the same, that the Israeli regime was the number-one violator of all international regulations with regard to human rights and disarmament and arms control in the Middle East, and the main source of regional threat and insecurity. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/gadis3696.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

**** Mapping Exercise - Youth Workers supporting young people facing racism & antisemitism in Scotland** (closing date 14 November 2022)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Z5YX2C7>

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