



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Downing Street

Prime Minister's New Year Message (video)

<https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1609112391798734848>

Scottish Government

First Minister's New Year Message (video)

<https://twitter.com/scotgov/status/1609082049134051335>

Welsh Government

First Minister's New Year Message

<https://www.gov.wales/first-minister-of-wales-new-year-message>

Cabinet Office: New Year Honours List 2023

The following people have been honoured for their services to the Jewish community and/or Holocaust education:

KBE

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Yitzchak Mirvis

For services to the Jewish Community, to Interfaith Relations and to Education

OBE

Jonathan Harry Samuel Arkush

President, Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, Co-Chair, Milah UK and lately President, Board of Deputies of British Jews. For service to Faith and to Integration

Smajo Beso	<i>Educator, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. For services to Genocide Education and Commemoration</i>
Sue Cipin	<i>Chief Executive Officer, Jewish Deaf Association. For services to Charity and to People with Hearing and Visual Impairments</i>
Michael Benjamin Karp	<i>Trustee, Holocaust Educational Trust. For services to Holocaust Education and Remembrance</i>
Susan Pollack	<i>For services to Holocaust Education and Awareness</i>
Marie van der Zyl	<i>President, The Board of Deputies of British Jews. For services to Faith and to Integration</i>

MBE

Ursula Julia Hanna Bernstein (Yvonne Bernstein)	<i>Educator, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. For services to Holocaust Education</i>
Lilly Ebert	<i>For services to Holocaust Education</i>
Mark David Gardner	<i>Chief Executive, Community Security Trust. For services to the Jewish Community</i>
Harry Heinz Heber	<i>Volunteer, World Jewish Relief and the Association of Jewish Refugees. For Charitable Services and Holocaust Education</i>
Rabbi David Michael Kale	<i>Faith Leader, Belfast Synagogue. For services to the Jewish Community in Northern Ireland</i>
Dr Chaim Harry Olmer	<i>Educator, Holocaust Educational Trust. For services to Holocaust Education</i>
Rachel Annabelle Riley	<i>Campaigner. For services to Holocaust Education</i>
Linda Rosenblatt	<i>Chair, World Jewish Relief Connections Committee. For services to charity in the UK and Abroad</i>

BEM

Michael Brown	<i>For services to Holocaust Education and Awareness</i>
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To read the full New Year Honours List 2023 see

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126850/NEW_YEAR_HONOURS_LIST_2023 - PRIME MINISTER S LIST.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126850/NEW_YEAR_HONOURS_LIST_2023_-_PRIME_MINISTER_S_LIST.pdf)

New Year Honours List 2023: High Awards

... Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

He has been Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth since 2013 and a pioneer of interfaith activity since his days as a congregational Rabbi. He has initiated Jewish-Muslim community engagement projects and created the 'In Good Faith' programme in partnership with the Archbishop of Canterbury, bringing together Anglican and Jewish clergy. He addresses global events with his vision of a 'Judaism of Responsibility' intervening, for example, on the plight of Uyghur Muslims, the only such intervention by a global faith leader. He has been an advocate for greater inclusivity in Orthodox Jewish life, appointing Britain's first female halachic adviser and establishing greater opportunities for female leadership and scholarship. In the field of education, the Chief Rabbi has championed the cause of faith schools and Jewish education and issued a guide on the well-being of LGBT+ pupils in Orthodox Jewish schools - the first of its kind anywhere in the world. ...

To read the full list see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-year-honours-list-2023-high-awards/new-year-honours-list-2023-high-awards-html>

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

This weekend I have felt both honoured and humbled in equal measure. Valerie and I appreciate enormously all the generous messages and good wishes, expressed both in public and in private. Thank you so much!

<https://twitter.com/chiefrabbi/status/1609515432607731712>

Board of Deputies

We congratulate our President, @marievanderzyl, on the news of her OBE. We are delighted for her and for all those in our community who received recognition as part of the New Year Honour's List.

<https://twitter.com/BoardofDeputies/status/1609254095382011906>

Community Security Trust (CST)

Proud of our CEO @MarkGardnerCST who is delighted to have received an MBE, Mark says that he "accepts this honour on behalf of @CST_UK as recognition of the hard work undertaken by the organisation in the fight against anti Jewish hatred."

https://twitter.com/CST_UK/status/1609238296206393345

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

New Year Honours for Holocaust and Genocide Survivor

... Yvonne Bernstein, a survivor of the Holocaust, and Smajo Beso, a survivor of the genocide in Bosnia, have been recognised for their dedication to Holocaust and genocide education and commemoration. ...

Yvonne Bernstein was a hidden child in France throughout most of the Holocaust. She was separated from her parents at two years old and put in the care of family, who were forced into hiding. She wasn't reunited with her parents until six years later ... Yvonne has dedicated much of her post-retirement life to Holocaust education and commemoration. ...

Smajo Bešo[’s] ... father, and several male relatives, were tortured by Serbian nationalist forces in concentration camps ... Smajo’s close family relatives were murdered. In 1994, Smajo and his family arrived in Newcastle as refugees and he has worked tirelessly to promote cross-cultural and inter-faith understanding ever since. He regularly shares his experiences and has played a vital role in organising Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/news/new-year-honours-for-holocaust-and-genocide-survivor/>

Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales

Pope Emeritus Benedict Requiescat in pace

... Cardinal Nichols wrote: ‘I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Pope Benedict. He will be remembered as one of the great theologians of the 20th century.

‘I remember with particular affection the remarkable Papal Visit to these lands in 2010.

‘We saw his courtesy, his gentleness, the perceptiveness of his mind and the openness of his welcome to everybody that he met. He was through and through a gentleman, through and through a scholar, through and through a pastor, through and through a man of God, close to the Lord and always his humble servant.

‘Pope Benedict is very much in my heart and in my prayers. I give thanks to God for his ministry and leadership.’ ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/pope-benedict-xvi-requiescat-in-pace/>

Bishops’ Conference of Scotland

President of Bishops’ Conference pays tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

The President of the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland Bishop Hugh Gilbert has paid tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI ...

“With the passing of Pope Emeritus Benedict, we lose one of the leading Catholic figures of the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of our own. By nature a shy and scholarly man and by profession a priest-theologian, he found himself drawn ever more into public life as Archbishop of Munich, as Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome and finally as Pope - the first German since the end of the 2nd World War to attain world pre-eminence. His memorable State visit to the United Kingdom in 2010 began in Scotland. The gentle and prayerful intelligence revealed during that visit disarmed his critics. He was often misunderstood, even caricatured. Contrary to a widespread perception, however, he was a resolutely contemporary “confessor of the faith”, deeply and critically engaged with modern thought, a lucid and unacademic preacher and pastorally sensitive. His bold, independent spirit surprised us all with his decision to resign while in office, the first Pope to do so for centuries. He once wrote: “my basic intention has been to expose the real core of the faith underneath the encrustations, and to give this core its true power and dynamism. This has been the constant direction of my life.” His full stature will surely emerge increasingly. May he rest in peace.”

<https://scmo.org/news-releases/perma/1672485120/article/president-of-bishops-conference-pays-tribute-to-po.html>

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Holocaust

See “New Year Honours for Holocaust and Genocide Survivor” which is included in the Home Affairs section above.

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Palestinians: Terrorism

Stephen Crabb (Conservative) [112078] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with the Palestinian Authority on the payment of salaries to Palestinians convicted of terror offences.

David Rutley: The UK remains resolute in its commitment to Israel's security. Our clear and long-standing message to the Palestinian Authority (PA) is that the prisoner payments system should be reformed so that it is needs based, transparent and affordable. We continue to raise this with the highest levels of the PA, most recently the British Consulate General Jerusalem raised the matter with the Palestinian Prime Minister's Office in December 2022. We also have robust safeguards in place to ensure that no UK aid is used for payments to Palestinian prisoners, or their families or the Martyrs Fund and will continue to raise this at the highest level.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-16/112078>

Nizar Banat

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [112080] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 6 December 2022, Official Report, 97558, what recent discussions he has had with the Palestinian Authority on upholding human rights and the death of human rights activist Nazir Banat.

David Rutley: The UK is clear that further improvements are needed in the Palestinian security sector. We regularly raise concerns about the handling of complaints of mistreatment, arbitrary detention or human rights abuses at the highest levels of the Palestinian Authority, including the failure to deliver a transparent investigation and accountability following the death in custody of Nizar Banat.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-16/112080>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-28/97558>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4250] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to support further dialogue between the peoples of Israel and Palestine; and in particular between (1) those active in civil society, and (2) others who influence public opinion; and what discussions they have held with other countries in support of such dialogue.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have a regular dialogue with both the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel in which we reiterate the need for both sides to prepare their populations for peaceful coexistence, including by promoting a more positive portrayal of one another to contribute to building the conditions needed for peace. We also continue to engage with civil society organisations in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We believe that negotiations will only succeed when they are conducted between Israelis and Palestinians, supported by the international community. We will continue to press the parties strongly on the need to refrain from taking actions that make peace more difficult.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-13/hl4250>

Israel: Palestinians

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4251] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Resolution of the UN General Assembly on 2 December calling for renewed peace talks between Israel and Palestine, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1850.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Every Israeli and Palestinian has the right to live in peace and security. We believe that negotiations will only succeed when they are conducted between Israelis and Palestinians, supported by the international community. We will continue to press the parties strongly on the need to refrain from taking actions that make peace more difficult.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-13/hl4251>

The first Resolution referred to above is probably the following, although this was adopted on 30 November, not 2 December. No relevant Resolutions were adopted on 2 December.

<https://undocs.org/en/A/77/L.26>

Resolution 1850, referred to above, can be read at

<http://unscr.com/files/2008/01850.pdf>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

James Cleverly: My best wishes @elico1 on your appointment. I look forward to working with you across our mutual priorities and to strengthen the bonds between the [British flag] and [Israeli flag] Congratulations to @Netanyahu on the formation of the 37th Israeli government.

<https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1608478559781244928>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Commission of Inquiry welcomes General Assembly resolution requesting an ICJ Advisory Opinion relating to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory

The UN Independent International [Commission of Inquiry](#) on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel, welcomes General Assembly resolution 77/400 deciding to request an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) relating to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.

The resolution, in accordance with Article 96 of the Charter of the United Nations, asks the ICJ - pursuant to Article 65 of the Statute of the Court - to render its opinion on the legal consequences arising from Israel's ongoing violation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, its prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and from its

adoption of discriminatory legislation and measures.

The resolution further asks the Court how Israel's policies and practices referenced affect the legal status of the occupation and what are the legal consequences that arise for all States and the UN.

In its [report](#) to the General Assembly, presented on 27 October, 2022 the Commission found there are reasonable grounds to conclude that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory is now unlawful under international law owing to its permanence and to ongoing actions undertaken by Israel to annex parts of the land de facto and de jure. ...

The Commission considers that a definitive clarification of the legal consequences of Israel's refusal to end the occupation, and what the obligation of third parties to ensure respect for international law are, will be crucial to member States and the UN in considering what further measures should be adopted to ensure full compliance with international law.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/12/commission-inquiry-welcomes-general-assembly-resolution-requesting-icj>

A report of the General Assembly debate referred to above is not yet available online.

The Resolution referred to above can be read at

<https://undocs.org/en/A/77/400>

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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

Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

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

Assisted dying/assisted suicide (closing date 20 January 2023)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/81/health-and-social-care-committee/news/174845/mps-launch-new-inquiry-on-assisted-dyingassisted-suicide/>

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