



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Israel

Other Relevant Information

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **Palestinians: UN Convention against Torture**

**Lord Pickles (Conservative)** [HL4459] To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the Palestinian Authority's compliance with the Optional Protocol of the Convention Against Torture.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Human Rights is a crucial element underpinning the UK's foreign policy. We continue to urge the Palestinian Authority (PA) to respect human rights, to ensure complaints of mistreatment or arbitrary detention are properly investigated and to further improve the performance of the security sector. An essential aspect of our efforts to prepare the ground for a two state-solution is to support a stable PA that can deliver services to its people and act as an effective partner for peace with Israel. The UK will continue to monitor these areas closely and raise with the highest levels of the PA.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-20/hl4459>

*The Protocol referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel>

#### **Palestinians: Textbooks**

**Lord Pickles (Conservative)** [HL4460] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether reports of antisemitic and extremist content in Palestinian school textbooks adhere to (1) the Palestinian Authority–Department for International Development Memorandum of Understanding, and (2) the Palestinian Authority's commitment to take action against incitement to violence.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Our partnership with the Palestinian Authority (PA) includes a commitment from the Palestinian leadership to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and actions that could incite violence or hatred. We have been clear that incitement to hatred or violence is unacceptable and has no place in education. We continue to assess the PA's commitment to peace in line

with our Partnership Principles.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-20/hl4460>

*Memoranda of Understanding between the Palestinian Authority and DfID, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300050/documents>

TOP

## Other Relevant Information

### UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

#### **Freedom of speech is not freedom to spread racial hatred on social media: UN experts**

... “In the early days of the Twitter acquisition, the Network Contagion Research Institute of Rutgers University highlighted that the use of the hateful and racist “N” word on the platform increased by almost 500 per cent within a 12-hour period compared to the previous average. Although Twitter advised this was based on a trolling campaign and that there is no place for hatred, the expression of hatred against people of African descent is deeply concerning and merits an urgent response centred on human rights.

“Hate speech”, advocacy of national, racial and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination and violence, as well as racism on social media, are not just a concern for Twitter but also for other social media giants such as Meta. While some claim to not allow hate speech there is a gap between company commitments to their policies and enforcement on social media sites. ...

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, recently penned an [open letter](#) to Twitter CEO Elon Musk which emphasised that free speech is not a free pass to spread harmful disinformation that results in real world harms. As he underlined Human rights law is clear – freedom of expression stops at hatred that incites discrimination, hostility or violence. ...

Allowing and tolerating the incitement to hatred and expression or advocacy of hatred ... not only encourages the perpetrators, but also constitutes a continuous source of chronic race-based traumatic stress and trauma. These can be cumulative effects of racism on an individual’s mental and physical health. The presence of racial hatred further undermines the confidence of the affected communities in utilising social media and seeking justice. ... Content moderation can only address a part of what happens in cyber space but does not take into account the intended and unintended effects in society. There are deeper issues about advocacy of racial hatred, lack of accountability for abuses, and an absence of efforts to promote tolerance. ... Social media has a major role to prevent further rifts so that racial justice and human rights can be upheld to build less racist, less divisive, more tolerant, just, and equitable societies. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/01/freedom-speech-not-freedom-spread-racial-hatred-social-media-un-experts>

TOP

## 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>

TOP

## 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-dying-assisted-suicide/>

TOP