



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Topical Questions: Education

**Nickie Aiken (Conservative):** When I met Jewish students studying in universities in my constituency, I was appalled to learn of the antisemitism they have to suffer, often on a daily basis. That was made worse by the recent report into the National Union of Students' handling and challenging of antisemitism. In the month when we mark Holocaust Memorial Day, I would be interested to hear the Minister's assessment of that NUS report.

**Robert Halfon:** I have been shocked and sobered by reading that report that the NUS was in essence a hostile place for Jewish students. That is not acceptable. The National Union of Students, the main body for students, should be a place that is not just safe but welcoming for Jewish students. The proof of the pudding with this report will be in the eating; I expect to see the changes and the recommendations implemented in full, and once that has occurred I will re-engage with the National Union of Students.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk//commons/2023-01-16/debates/C00B19B7-6849-4519-AEC8-ACA5AF94CC9A/TopicalQuestions#contribution-56975C5C-F751-4E54-AC17-E7168DB4133C>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471780/Independent Investigation into Antisemitism Report NUS 12 January 2023.pdf?1673471780](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471780/Independent%20Investigation%20into%20Antisemitism%20Report%20NUS%2012%20January%202023.pdf?1673471780)

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Antisemitism

**Diana Johnson (Labour) [117512]** To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of instances of antisemitism towards the Jewish community in the last 12 months.

**Lee Rowley:** Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we

welcome the recent report from Lord Mann, the Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism. We are already taking a strong lead in antisemitism in all its forms. The Home Office is providing £14 million this year through the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant to provide protective security measures at Jewish schools, colleges, nurseries and synagogues; the Department is providing £500,000 to the Holocaust Education Trust from 2020/21 to 2022/23 to deliver their Lessons from Auschwitz project, as an example. We will continue to work together with Lord Mann on this vital issue.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-06/117512>

*Information about the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/protective-security-grant-funding-for-jewish-institutions-to-continue>

### **Hinduism: Hate Crime**

**Andrew Rosindell (Conservative)** [117491] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help protect Hindu communities from (a) religious- and (b) racially-motivated hate crime.

**Lee Rowley:** There is no place in our country for hatred towards Hindus in this area. We have some of the strongest legislation in the world which aims to protect Hindus from both racially and religiously motivated crime. We encourage those who have experienced hatred to come forward to the Police or to report to the Police online portal True Vision. The Home Office's Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme has also provided physical security protection measures to places of worship across England and Wales that are particularly vulnerable to religiously motivated hate crime, including 26 Hindu temples.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-06/117491>

*The True Vision portal referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.report-it.org.uk/>

*Information about the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-security-funding-scheme>

### **Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare**

**Andrew Rosindell (Conservative)** [117489] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to (a) improve standards of animal welfare in abattoirs and (b) help ensure that farm animals have a humane death.

**Mark Spencer:** The Government encourages the highest standards of animal welfare at killing. To help ensure farm animals have a humane death, legislation requires that animals are spared avoidable pain, suffering, or distress during killing and related operations. These requirements are monitored and enforced by Official Veterinarians of the Food Standards Agency in all slaughterhouses.

Following a review

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-of-animals-at-the-time-of-killing-england-regulations-2015-post-implementation-review>

of the legislation protecting animal welfare at the time of killing, and as part of our Action Plan for Animal Welfare, we are carefully considering a wide range of welfare at slaughter improvements that could be made to legislation and practice, including in slaughterhouses.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-06/117489>

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# Holocaust

## House of Commons Oral Answers

### Holocaust Memorial Day

**Daniel Kawczynski (Conservative)** [903058] What steps [is the Minister's] Department is taking to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day in schools.

**The Minister of State, Department for Education (Robert Halfon):** Many schools and colleges already mark Holocaust Memorial Day—I have attended such a remembrance service at Harlow College—and they work closely with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Holocaust Educational Trust, two institutions that the Government support. That is all the more important given the 128 incidents of antisemitism in one year in our higher education institutions, and the fact that, sadly, such incidents are now at an all-time high.

**Daniel Kawczynski:** As well as educating children about the horrors of the holocaust and the second world war, can we take the opportunity to educate children about the tremendous courage, bravery and sacrifices of the Righteous Among the Nations? Many people on the continent gave up their lives to protect their Jewish friends and neighbours. One example was a member of my family, Jan Kawczynski, his wife Helena and their 13-year-old daughter Magdalena, who were all shot by the Germans for protecting and hiding their Jewish friends and neighbours on their estate in western Poland. As well as educating children about the misery of the holocaust, we must give them inspiration from the fact that many of our brothers and sisters in occupied Europe made the ultimate sacrifice to protect friends and neighbours of the Jewish faith.

**Robert Halfon:** Hear, hear. It was very moving to hear of the experience of my hon. Friend's family, and I entirely agree with him: we must teach and remind people that there were many righteous Gentiles who suffered while doing everything possible to save Jews. A famous Polish lady, Irena Sendler, saved 2,000 Jewish children from the Warsaw ghettos, and was remembered in a special exhibition in the House of Commons in 2018, which I was pleased to attend. My hon. Friend has made a powerful point, and I am sure that schools up and down the country will be listening to what he says.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-16/debates/1638B19F-9623-43DA-912E-C0515753825D/HolocaustMemorialDay>

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# Israel

## House of Commons Written Answers

### West Bank: Weapons

**Andrew Percy (Conservative)** [113261] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Palestinian Authority on the potential smuggling of weapons and other contraband into the West Bank.

**David Rutley:** We continue to closely monitor the security situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The UK continues to provide the Palestinian Authority (PA) with professional support in helping develop its security institutions. The UK remains committed to a two state-solution, as Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for the Middle East made clear on his visit to the

Occupied Palestinian Territories from 11-13 January. An essential part of our efforts is the provision of training and other technical assistance to the PA Ministry of Interior and PA Security Forces (PASF), to support the development of capable, responsible security forces that respect human rights and are accountable to the Palestinian people.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-19/113261>

### **Palestinians: Detainees**

**Paul Holmes (Conservative)** [113454] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Joint Submission by Human Rights Watch and Lawyers for Justice to the Committee Against Torture on Palestine, published July 2022, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Palestinian Authority on arbitrary arrest and torture in detention.

**David Rutley:** 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 continue to improve the performance of the security sector. The UK remains committed to a two state-solution, as Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for the Middle East, made clear on his visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories from 11-13 January. And 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/2022-12-19/113454>

*The submission referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/30/joint-submission-human-rights-watch-and-lawyers-justice-committee-against-torture>

## **UK Parliament Early Day Motion**

**Grahame Morris (Labour)** [760] **Killing of Palestinian journalists** – That this House welcomes submissions to the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate and the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) following the killing of Palestinian journalists by Israeli forces; recognises the need for such intervention following the commission of deplorable attacks against journalists in Palestine over several years, resulting in the killing of 48 journalists, including Shireen Abu Akleh, since 2000; joins the National Union of Journalists in condemnation of ongoing impunity for crimes committed against journalists enjoyed by members of the Israeli forces; urges immediate action by the ICC prosecutor to investigate and prosecute those responsible for attacks against and killing of journalists in Palestine; regrets that delays to action amount to a denial of justice to victims; and demands respect for the rights of journalists to undertake their work without fearing for their safety due to the actions of Israel Defense Forces.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60482>

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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>

Notice of amendments

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0209/amend/onlinesafety\\_day\\_rep\\_0117.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0209/amend/onlinesafety_day_rep_0117.pdf)

#### **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>

Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland: Statement from Alister Jack

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill-statement-from-alister-jack>

Response from the First Minister of Scotland

<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1614988657433116672>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

### **\*\* closes in 3 days**

**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/>

### **\*\* closes in 10 days**

**NUS UK Antisemitism Action Plan** (closing date 27 January 2023)

[https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471793/NUS\\_Antisemitism\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Jan2023.pdf](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/nus/pages/108/attachments/original/1673471793/NUS_Antisemitism_Action_Plan_Jan2023.pdf)

**\*\* Draft guidance: charities use of social media** (closing date 14 March 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-guidance-charities-use-of-social-media>

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