



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL5317] To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel about the proposal to legalise Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the impact this will have on securing a two-state solution in the region.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's position on settlements is clear, as set out in a statement made by the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Italy, the Foreign Secretary of the UK, and the Secretary of State of the US on 14 February. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. We urge Israel to halt its settlement expansion. The UK remains committed to a two-state solution, as I made clear in my meetings with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh and Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki, during my visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 10-13 January.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-01/hl5317>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-statement-on-announcement-of-further-settlements-in-the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL5318] To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel regarding (1) the right of Palestinians living in Israel (a) to hold Israeli citizenship, and (b) to vote in Israeli elections, and (2) statements by the Minister for Internal Security in that country regarding the extension of Israeli sovereignty over the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Palestinian citizens of Israel have full citizenship rights, including voting in elections. However, we are aware that Palestinians who live in East Jerusalem do not enjoy the same rights. We regularly raise issues related to the situation in East Jerusalem, for example evictions and demolitions of property as well as revocation of residency rights, with the Israeli authorities and

the Jerusalem municipality. It has been the position of the UK government since 1967 that the Occupied Palestinian Territories (the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza) are not lawfully part of the State of Israel. The Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Italy, the Foreign Secretary of the UK, and the Secretary of State of the US set out on 14 February in a statement their support for a "comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, which must be achieved through direct negotiations between the parties.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-01/hl5318>

Israeli Settlements

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL5319] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proposed reduction in the powers of the Supreme Court in Israel by the new government of that country; particularly in respect of the laws regarding Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Constitutional reforms are by-and-large a matter for the Israeli people and their government, however the UK believes strongly in the principle of an independent judiciary and Israel is rightly proud of its history as a Jewish and democratic state. The UK's position on settlements is clear, as set out in a statement made by the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Italy, the Foreign Secretary of the UK, and the Secretary of State of the US on 14 February . They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. In terms of the law which applies to Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, it has long been the UK government's view that Israel's presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is governed by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to which Israel is a state party. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and we have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-01/hl5319>

Department for International Trade

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Israel

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136154/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-02-17.pdf

Updated Trade and Investment Factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136357/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-02-17.pdf

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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://bills.parliament.uk/publications/49700/documents/2964>

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

Equality and Human Rights Commission Statutory Review (closing date 1 March 2023)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-statutory-review>

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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