



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Hate Motivation Statistics: Quarterly update, period ending 31 December 2022

Bulletin

<https://www.psni.police.uk/system/files/2023-02/1312217435/Hate%20Motivations%20Bulletin%20Period%20ending%2031st%20December%202022.pdf>

Tables

<https://www.psni.police.uk/system/files/2023-02/921779174/Hate%20Motivations%20Tables%20Period%20Ending%2031st%20December%202022.xlsx>

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Holocaust

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

New Bill introduced to pave way for National Holocaust Memorial

The Government today (23rd February) introduced new legislation that will progress the construction of a national Holocaust memorial.

Located next to the Houses of Parliament, the memorial will serve as a powerful reminder to the whole nation of the Holocaust, its victims and where prejudice can lead if unchallenged.

The Holocaust Memorial Bill, announced by The Prime Minister in January, updates legislation dating back to the Victorian times, removing a statutory obstacle that has previously prevented the building of a new memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens in Westminster.

Levelling Up Secretary Rt Hon Michael Gove MP said: "As a nation, it is vital we learn from the past to build a future which is free from prejudice and hatred.

"This memorial will rightly sit at the heart of Westminster, alongside other great symbols of

our democracy, and will act as an inspiration to the whole nation for generations to come. “Today’s Bill is timely as the remaining survivors are becoming older and fewer in number, meaning it is vital that we push ahead with the Memorial – we owe it to the six million Jewish people who were murdered.”

Planning consent for the Holocaust Memorial to be built in Victoria Tower Gardens was granted in July 2021, but the decision was quashed by the High Court in April 2022 due to historical legislation passed in 1900 to extend the gardens.

This Bill seeks to remove this obstacle and ensure that the project can be completed as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

Careful design means the memorial will enhance the gardens, ensuring they continue to provide an important public garden available to residents and visitors to Westminster. Paths and seating will be more attractive and accessible, and landscaping improvements will enhance the local environment.

The memorial and learning centre will be free to visitors, with timed entry tickets. ...

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-bill-introduced-to-pave-way-for-national-holocaust-memorial>

Information about the Bill referred to above can be read at

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

Letter from the Permanent Secretary regarding the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre programme

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1138205/Letter_from_the_Permanent_Secretary_regarding_the_UK_Holocaust_Memorial_and_Learning_Centre_programme.pdf

Letter from the Secretary of State regarding the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre programme

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1138208/Letter_from_the_Secretary_of_State_regarding_the_UK_Holocaust_Memorial_and_Learning_Centre_programme.pdf

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Israel

UK Parliament House of Commons Library

Lebanon: Introductory country profile

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9729/CBP-9729.pdf>

United Nations

Warning Situation in Occupied Palestinian Territory ‘at Its Most Combustible’ in Years, Secretary-General Urges Action to Ease Tensions, as Rights Committee Begins Session: UN Secretary-General António Guterres’ remarks at the opening of the 2023 session of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

... We meet as the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is at its most combustible in years. Just this morning, we had more deeply concerning news. An operation by Israeli security forces and ensuing clash in Nablus left 10 Palestinians dead and over 80 injured.

Deadly cycles of violence keep accelerating. Tensions are sky high. And the peace process remains stalled. The situation in Jerusalem/Al-Quds is becoming more fragile amidst provocations and acts of violence in and around the holy sites. It radiates instability across the region and beyond.

The position of the United Nations is clear: The status of Jerusalem cannot be altered by unilateral actions. Jerusalem's demographic and historical character must be preserved — and the status quo at the holy sites must be upheld, in line with the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

2022 was the deadliest year for Palestinians since the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs began systematically tracking fatalities in 2005. Two months into the new year, violence rages on without reprieve. Across the occupied West Bank and Gaza, hopelessness is spreading, feeding anger and despair. Each new settlement is another roadblock on the path to peace. All settlement activity is illegal under international law. And it must stop.

At the same time, incitement to violence is a dead end. Nothing justifies terrorism. It must be rejected by all. Our immediate priority must be to prevent further escalation, reduce tensions and restore calm.

I am deeply concerned by Israel's recent punitive measures against the Palestinian Authority following the resolution of the General Assembly seeking an International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the occupation. ... These measures risk further destabilizing the Palestinian Authority at a time when it is already struggling with a dire fiscal crisis that is undermining its ability to provide services to people.

Meanwhile, another vital lifeline for Palestinians — the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) — continues to confront the impossible task of meeting soaring needs with stagnating funding. ...

In this context, let me also note the importance of easing the movement of goods and people in and out of the Gaza Strip. ...

Our ultimate goals remain unchanged: end the occupation, realize a two-State solution. But, we must face today's reality. The truth is that trends on the ground mean time is working against us. The longer we go without meaningful political negotiations, the further these goals slip from the reach. ...

What is needed is the political will and courage to make the difficult choices for peace. A peace that ends the occupation and ensures two States — Israel and an independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian State — living side by side within secure and recognized borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States. A peace in which Palestinians and Israelis alike enjoy equal measures of democracy, opportunity and dignity in their lives. A peace, in short, that is just, comprehensive and lasting.

I pledge to keep working to support this goal.

To read the full transcript see

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21965.doc.htm>

Following Deadly Israeli Security Force Operation in Nablus, Speakers Urge Immediate End to Cycle of Violence, as Palestinian Rights Committee Begins Annual Session

... "We will work with you, Mr. Secretary-General, but we need to see action," **Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine**, said during his address to the Committee. Describing the anger and frustration among the Palestinian people, he said it is increasingly difficult to convince them that Security Council resolutions will be implemented. They keep seeing the Organization adopting appropriate documents but "they don't see teeth to these resolutions", he said.

Condemning this morning's attack in Nablus, a city that is supposedly under the control of the Palestinian Authority, he noted that so far 10 people, including children and the elderly, have died, with many fighting for their lives. The timing of the Nablus massacre was not

an accident, he said, adding that Israel knew that “the international community will be busy with another big issue” and assumed nobody will pay attention. Despite the Council presidential statement adopted two days ago, which emphasized the need for humanitarian access, the Israeli occupying forces did not allow ambulances access this morning, he said. ...

If principles such as the right to self-determination and the inadmissibility of acquisition of land by force are applicable to other situations in the world, they should also be applicable to Palestine, he declared. ...

Cheikh Niang (Senegal), speaking upon his re-election as Committee Chair, said the devotion to the Committee demonstrated by those present reflect their countries’ respective commitment to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Israel’s continued occupation and illegal practices — including settlement activities, creeping annexation and deliberate demographic change — constitute a serious threat to the sovereignty of the Palestinian State. ...

He went on to welcome the Security Council’s recent adoption of a presidential statement condemning Israeli settlement activities ... He also stressed that the peace process must be relaunched, and that all pending matters must be discussed, including the status of Jerusalem, refugees, security and the situation in Gaza. ...

The representative of the League of Arab States noted the double standards within the United Nations when it comes to the situation in Ukraine versus the situation in Palestine. Pointing to the multiple meetings convened on Ukraine, including the one later today, he said the attitude towards Palestine is different. This makes it essential to support Palestine in various international forums such as the International Court of Justice ... Also stressing the importance of international recognition for Palestinian statehood, he said the Committee must convince more countries to recognize the State of Palestine. ...

Jordan’s delegate expressed concern about “attempts to obfuscate reality”, noting that two days ago in the Council, the representative of Israel demonized Palestinian children as terrorists. He was trying to justify Israel’s legitimate right to kill Palestinian children, he said, also expressing concern about media reports that portray Israel as the victim. ...

The speaker for Lebanon noted how the occupation has deprived Palestinian people of their land and their identity while **the representative of Türkiye** condemned Israel’s legalization of nine outposts in the West Bank, as illegal “even under Israeli law”. ...

Egypt’s delegate condemned the killing of innocent civilians, the use of live munitions against children, the demolition of Palestinian homes and the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip for more than 15 years. ...

Feda Abdelhady-Nasser, an observer for the State of Palestine ... add[ed] that the Palestinian people are grieving yet again today, part of a painful, ongoing grief for all the devastation inflicted on generation after generation. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/gapal1449.doc.htm>

The presidential statement referred to above can be read at

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/052/50/PDF/N2305250.pdf?OpenElement>

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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>

**** Holocaust Memorial Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

Bill as introduced

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0254/220254.pdf>

Explanatory Notes

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0254/en/220254en.pdf>

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/2992>

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>

Scottish Parliament Information Centre Briefing

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/2023/2/21/76ae9826-7bfd-4703-98c7-bb7382e0d74f/SB%2023-07.pdf>

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

**** closes in 6 days**

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