



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Scottish Parliament Motion

Pam Gosal (Conservative) [S6M-08057] Ramadan 2023 – That the Parliament congratulates all those celebrating the start of Ramadan 2023 in Scotland, the rest of the UK and around the world; notes that the blessed month of Ramadan will start on 22 March 2023 and will last for 30 days; understands that the ninth month of the Islamic calendar is a month of fasting from sunrise until sunset, the study of Islam, prayer and worship, and good deeds; appreciates the charitable giving during Ramadan to those who are in need, and wishes everyone Ramadan Mubarak.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-08057>

Welsh Senedd

Ymlaen: The Senedd's Internship for Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority graduates

The Senedd Commission (Senedd) has partnered with the Windsor Fellowship to launch a new internship programme, offering four opportunities to individuals from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background. ...

We are offering a paid, 12-month training internship for four graduates from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background. You can choose to apply for placements within various areas across the organisation. ...

Training at the Senedd means you will be at the heart of Welsh politics, developing your skills and knowledge on how to best navigate and assist a busy and exciting workplace where Welsh laws are made. ...

Who can apply?

- A resident in the UK or Ireland for a minimum of three years ...
- You must be from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background.
- You have the right to work in the UK without restrictions. ...
- You are a graduate by the time the scheme starts.
- You are living in Wales. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.windsor-fellowship.org/programmes/ymlaen-the-senedds-internship-for-black-asian-and-ethnic-minority-graduates/>

Welsh Government

School attendance and religious festivals guidance 2023

Note that while the date of Kol Nidre is listed (as “Yom Kippur”), the date of Yom Kippur day has been omitted from the Judaism section. Similarly, the date of the evening of Simchat Torah has been listed, but not the day. Chanukah has been omitted from the third table but is included in the first two.

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-03/School-attendance-and-religious-festivals-guidance-2023.pdf>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Israel: Palestinians

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [153775] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the situation in Huwara.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, set out the UK's concern at the scenes of abhorrent violence in Huwara in his statement of 26 February. The UK also condemned in the strongest terms the retaliatory incidents of violence by settlers against Palestinians, and stresses the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. As Lord Ahmad stated on 26 February, the deadly cycle of violence must end.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-27/153775>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://twitter.com/tariqahmadbt/status/1629968228008034305>

House of Lords Written Answer

Israel: Palestinians

The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL5714] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision by the government of Israel to prohibit Palestinians under the age of 22 from entering Israel to participate in organised peace-building activities and the impact that this will have on UK-funded cross-community peace building work in the region.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to call upon the Government of Israel to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of Palestinians and civil society organisations and to allow them to freely operate in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Israel must abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Lord Ahmad, has raised human rights concerns in several recent engagements with

the Israeli Ambassador, including a call on 16 February. The UK is committed to making progress towards a negotiated two-state solution. In support of this, we continue to fund peacebuilding projects focused on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The UK remains committed to a two-state solution, as I [Lord Ahmad] made clear in 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/2023-02-20/hl5714>

House of Lords Library

Israel-Palestine conflict: Recent developments and statements

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/israel-palestine-conflict-recent-developments-and-statements/>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Updated Travel Advice: Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel>

Updated Travel Advice: The Occupied Palestinian Territories

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

PACE rapporteur urges Israeli MPs to reconsider preliminary decision to allow death penalty for terrorists

On Wednesday the Israeli Knesset gave its preliminary approval to a bill that would allow courts to impose the death penalty for terrorists found guilty of killing Israeli citizens.

“This is a worrying development,” Aleksandar Nikoloski (North Macedonia, EPP/CD), PACE’s General Rapporteur on abolition of the death penalty, said in a statement today.

“The rejection of capital punishment is a basic principle of the Council of Europe. The European Court of Human Rights has established that capital punishment is not compatible with the right to life and that it amounts to ‘inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’ contrary to the prohibition on torture. This applies in all circumstances, including in the fight against terrorism.

The Knesset has observer status with the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly. I appeal, on behalf of the Assembly, to fellow MPs in Israel to reconsider their preliminary decision concerning this bill. I should like to recall that in December 2020, Israel was a co-sponsor of UN General Assembly Resolution 75/183 on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty and voted in favour of this resolution.

The bill currently under consideration in the Knesset, if passed, represents a most regrettable step backwards, flying in the face of the world-wide trend against the use of capital punishment – a trend that Israel has until recently helped to promote.”

<https://pace.coe.int/en/news/8990/pace-rapporteur-urges-israeli-mps-to-reconsider-preliminary-decision-to-allow-death-penalty-for-terrorists>

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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>

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/49991/documents/3049>

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

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