



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Funerals: Jews

Fabian Hamilton (Labour) [169210] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure the Jewish community's burial traditions are not interrupted by the changes to the process for the registrations of deaths which occur in the community rather than in hospital.

Maria Caulfield: NHS England lead on the operational delivery of the medical examiner system in England and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership in Wales. In relation to rapid release of the body requests, NHS England's good practice series includes how medical examiners can facilitate urgent release of a body. This is published by the lead Royal College for medical examiners the Royal College of Pathologists.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169210>

The good practice publication referred to above can be read at

<https://www.rcpath.org/resourceLibrary/good-practice-series-urgent-release-of-a-body.html>

Office for National Statistics

**Religion by housing, health, employment and education, England and Wales:
Census 2021**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/religionbyeducationemploymenthealthandhousingenglandandwalescensus2021>

Scottish Government

Hate crime strategy

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/hate-crime-strategy-scotland/>

TOP

Holocaust

House of Lords Written Answer

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL6311] To ask His Majesty's Government what amount they have spent so far on the proposed Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens; and what estimate they have made of the final cost of preparing the Holocaust Memorial Bill for introduction in Parliament.

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Spend to date on the Holocaust Memorial programme is set out in the table below. No separate estimate has been made of the administrative cost of preparing the Holocaust Memorial Bill.

Figures in £m inc VAT Numbers may not sum due to rounding	Spend to Date	
Client		
Staff	3.6	
Contractors	1.1	
Programme	1	
Early programme expenditure	0.6	
Total Client		6.3
Content Research and Development		2
Design		
Architect	3.5	
Design engineer	1.4	
Project and cost management	1.2	
Technical support	0.5	
Planning app and conditions	0.5	
Peer Reviews and technical reports	0.1	
Professional advice	0.3	
Total Design		7.4
Exhibition Delivery		
Consultants	0.2	
Designers	0.2	
Total Exhibition Delivery		0.4
Construction		
Enabling works	0.2	
Basement Box (pre-construction)	0.1	
Total Construction		0.3
Planning Inquiry		1.4
Totals		17.8

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/hl6311>

TOP

House of Commons Oral Answers

Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories

col 437 Anum Qaisar (SNP): (Urgent Question): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs if he will make a statement on talks to de-escalate the violence in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): The UK is intensely focused on, and concerned by, the increasing violence on the west bank. The Foreign Secretary spoke to his Israeli counterpart, Eli Cohen, on Tuesday to emphasise the importance of Israeli de-escalation ahead of the convergence of Easter, Passover and Ramadan. As the Foreign Secretary set out to this House on 14 March, he has also urged the Palestinian leadership to take steps to avoid a cycle of violence. While the security situation remains fragile, I welcome Israeli and Palestinian engagement in the meetings in Aqaba on 26 February and Sharm el-Sheikh on 19 March. It is critical that both parties abide by the commitments made there publicly and take forward the confidence-building measures that they have promised.

The UK wants to see three steps that would demonstrate commitment to de-escalating the worrying situation in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. First, the Palestinian Authority must resume security co-operation with Israel, fight against terror and incitement of violence, and improve the security situation in area A of the west bank. Too many Israelis have been killed in terror attacks in Israel and the west bank this year. Such targeted attacks against civilians are unlawful, unjustifiable and repugnant.

Secondly, Israel must do more to tackle unacceptable settler violence such as that perpetrated against innocent Palestinians in Huwara. The UK has consistently urged Israeli security forces to provide appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, bring to justice perpetrators of settler violence and end the culture of impunity. The UK condemned the Israeli Finance Minister's comments calling for the Palestinian village of Huwara to be "wiped out" and his recent comments that deny the existence of the Palestinian people, their right to self-determination and their history and culture.

Thirdly, Israel must also cease its unilateral steps that push parties further from dialogue and reduce the possibility of meaningful negotiations. Those steps include stopping approval of settlements, legalisation of outposts and evictions of Palestinians in occupied territory, particularly in east Jerusalem. The Foreign Secretary raised our concerns about the speculation of settlement building on the E1 site in the OPTs and we are pleased that there has now been a moratorium on that expansion. However, we are deeply concerned at the recent repeal of the 2005 Disengagement Plan Implementation Law by the Knesset. That decision is another unilateral measure that damages any renewed efforts at de-escalation and risks further undermining a two-state solution.

All Israelis and Palestinians deserve peace and security, not just through the upcoming festivals of Easter, Passover and Ramadan this spring, but for the long term. That will require political will, good faith, strong co-operation and meaningful actions by both Israelis and Palestinians. The UK remains resolute in its commitment to a two-state solution based on 1967 lines.

col 438 Anum Qaisar: I pay my respects to both Palestinians and Israelis who have been killed in recent violence. Ramadan Mubarak; today marks the start of Ramadan and I, like many Muslims, am fasting. Yet Muslims and those of other faiths or no faith in the occupied Palestinian territories have seen a significant increase in human rights violations

perpetrated by Israeli authorities.

More than 1,000 Palestinians are at imminent risk of forcible transfer from Masafer Yatta, an action that would amount to a war crime. The situation is rapidly deteriorating and Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, lands in the UK today on a state visit. During talks, the UK Government must call for a de-escalation of violence.

Amnesty International concluded last year that Israel is “committing the crime of apartheid against Palestinians.”

Will the UK Government raise those concerns with the Prime Minister? The Finance Minister recently stated: “There is no such thing as a Palestinian people”, and said he wanted to see the Palestinian village of Huwara wiped off the map. Will the Minister put on record her disgust at that type of language?

The Israeli Government continue to push for the development of illegal settlements, despite promising not to do so. If that construction does not stop, will the UK Government commit to suspending trade deal talks with Israeli counterparts until we can ensure human rights are safeguarded?

The UK Government must acknowledge the systematic and calculated discrimination against Palestinians in occupied territories carried out by the Israeli military and authorities. Will the Government finally halt their approval of the sale of arms to Israel and support the need for an independent investigation by the International Criminal Court into human rights violations?

We are approaching the one-year anniversary of the murder of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. Al Jazeera has escalated her killing to the ICC after the Israeli defence force refused to investigate her killing and former Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid said: “No one will investigate IDF soldiers and no one will preach to us about morals in warfare”. Do the Government accept that, unless they urgently support the ICC investigation, they are turning a blind eye to blatant military impunity for murdering Palestinians?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: I am happy to repeat that the UK condemned the Israeli Finance Minister’s comments calling for the Palestinian village of Huwara to be wiped out, and his recent comments denying the existence of the Palestinian people. ...

Prime Minister Netanyahu ... will have a short meeting with the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary. I know that the Prime Minister will raise the issues that concern us ...

col 439 The UK is committed to working with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to advance that peaceful two-state solution. We voted no on the resolution pertaining to referral to the ICC because we consider that is not helpful to bringing the parties back to dialogue. ...

Theresa Villiers (Conservative): In recent weeks, three of the many terrorist attacks that have occurred in Israel were committed by children under 15—two stabbings and one shooting. I ask the Government to urge the Palestinian Authority to do more to tackle that toxic culture of radicalisation and anti-Israel hatred, which is leading to the exploitation and radicalisation of children, and to their involvement in terrorist attacks.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: My right hon. Friend highlights one of the most distressing aspects of the continued violence and despair between both countries. ... I have no doubt that the Prime Minister will raise that in his meetings tomorrow and ask parties to continue to take urgent measures to reduce tensions, de-escalate the situation and, indeed, end that deadly cycle of violence. Of course, that includes supporting them in trying to keep children away from that radicalisation position. ...

Bambos Charalambous (Labour): The Labour party stands for international law, human rights and a negotiated peace based on a two-state solution, with a safe and secure Israel alongside a sovereign Palestinian state.

At the last elections, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu went into coalition with the far right and, under that new Government, an already fragile situation has worsened. His

promotion of extremists Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich has put ultra-nationalism in key positions of the Israeli Government. I am sure that the whole House will have been appalled by Smotrich's remarks in Paris this weekend, when he denied the very existence of the Palestinian people and their culture.

Thus far, 2023 has seen one of the highest death tolls for Palestinians and Israelis in a long time, with more than 80 Palestinians and 14 Israelis killed this year. ... President Netanyahu's attempts to undermine judicial independence and dispense with equality laws for the LGBT+ community are sowing division and deep unease. The weekly mass protests in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem demonstrate that Israeli society is now also deeply divided.

col 440 What is the Minister's assessment of the impact of what many in Israel see as fundamental attacks on their precious democracy? ... I am deeply concerned that the recently signed road map for UK-Israel bilateral relations dilutes long-standing UK positions, held by successive Governments, in relation to international law. The road map makes no mention of supporting a two-state solution, and it implies that settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories could be treated as part of Israel for the purposes of trade. ...

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: ... The road map that the Foreign Secretary signed with his counterpart earlier in the week in London fulfils the commitments that were made in the November 2021 memorandum of understanding on strengthening co-operation across a range of relationships around our economic, security and technology ties and, importantly, advancing our co-operation on environmental and climate change issues, and leveraging our combined strengths in that area to address some of the global health challenges. It also contains provisions on the importance of regional co-operation in working together to expand the historic Abraham accords. That is a series of practical issues that we will work upon together with our Israeli friends, but it does not in any way change the UK's position—it is good to hear the shadow Minister set out the same—on the agreed settlement that we continue to support.

Matthew Offord (Conservative): Polling conducted by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research showed that 72% of all Palestinians supported the formation of armed terror groups such as the Lions' Den. These groups have been behind more than 1,000 terror incidents over the last year and are facilitated with Iranian and Hezbollah financial and military support. Does my right hon. Friend share my concern at the emergence of these groups, the high level of support they are receiving and the Palestinian Authority's apparent loss of control over so much of the west bank to these terror groups?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: I reiterate that we absolutely condemn violence from all sides, and we want to ensure that we help the Palestinian Authority to improve their security through the work of the British support team in Ramallah ... We remain resolute in our commitment to Israel's security, and we condemn Hamas's use of indiscriminate and abhorrent rocket attacks. ...

col 441 **Drew Hendry (SNP):** ... This week, the Israeli Parliament voted to allow Israeli citizens to occupy four sites in the west bank evacuated in the 2005 disengagement. The High Court of Justice has already classified this as private Palestinian land. Clearly, the moratorium that the Minister mentioned is not being respected here.

We know that this is not a simple situation, but there are some simple steps that we can take here to make a difference. Will the Minister support the UK banning trade in Israeli settlement goods? Will she include the UK Government's own stated position that these settlements are illegal in any and all agreements with Israel and provide for consequences for breach of that? Will she also carry that forward into forthcoming trade deal discussions? Will she stop the export of equipment and arms proven to be repeatedly used in settlement expansion, and will she do it now?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The UK's position on settlements is clear: settlements are

illegal under international law and call into question Israel's commitment to the two-state solution. We have urged Israel to halt its settlement expansion, which we believe threatens the physical viability of a Palestinian state. In February, we and our partners—the US, France, Germany and Italy—set out strong opposition to these unilateral steps. ...

In relation to trade matters, our long-established position on settlements is clear: the UK does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories as part of Israel, including illegal settlements. Goods originating from illegal Israeli settlements in the west bank, including East Jerusalem, are not entitled to tariff and trade preferences under either the existing trade agreement between the UK and Israel or, indeed, the agreement between the UK and the Palestinian Authority.

Pauline Latham (Conservative): I was really pleased to hear from the Minister that she and the Government continue to support the two-state solution on the former boundaries of 1967. How does she believe that can happen? When I visited recently, the settlements are being built on top of Palestinian houses, and they are insisting on demolitions of Palestinian houses. How can it possibly work?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: My hon. Friend raises the concerns that we all have. ...

col 442 **Andy McDonald (Labour):** Time after time, we see on social media the crimes against humanity being visited on the Palestinian people. We see it with regularity: homes, houses and schools being destroyed, with bulldozers at the door. Will the Minister understand that this country has a special responsibility and a special place of leverage to make demands? We cannot keep going with the same endless warm words around this conflict. The time has come for this Government to recognise the state of Palestine with immediate effect, and to demand a ban on settlement goods and on the settlements themselves. Will she commit to that?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I say, the UK Government continue to ask all parties to take urgent measures to reduce those tensions and de-escalate the situation. Because of what the hon. Gentleman has described, we continue to make those statements, and we are engaging closely with all our international partners to try to help end that deadly cycle of violence. ...

Bob Blackman (Conservative): Since January, 14 Israelis have been murdered by Palestinian terrorists, and 80 Palestinians have lost their lives during confrontation with the IDF or in the course of terrorist activities. At the same time, we have seen the emergence of Lions' Den and other terrorist groups, and we have also seen the role of Iran in encouraging those terrorist groups across the world. Will my right hon. Friend review the position on Lions' Den and these other terrorist groups so that they are proscribed in this country, and also finally proscribe the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in its entirety?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As my hon. Friend is aware, this is a Home Office issue, and as I have said, Prime Minister Netanyahu will be meeting the Home Secretary tomorrow on his visit. ...

Wayne David (Labour): As the Minister has said, the settlements on the west bank are illegal and they undermine the possibility of a two-state solution, so will the Government make it absolutely clear to Benjamin Netanyahu that any attempt to annex the west bank is totally and unequivocally unacceptable?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I have said, the UK's position on settlements is absolutely clear. Settlements are illegal under international law and they call into question Israel's commitment to a two-state solution. ...

col 443 **Jo Gideon (Conservative):** The historic Abraham accords prove once and for all that peace between Israel and her Arab neighbours is not only possible, but can quickly bring remarkable and positive change to the region. Will my right hon. Friend join me in celebrating the accords, and does she agree that Palestinian leaders would be best served by embracing their spirit and joining Israel at the negotiating table as soon as possible?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The Abraham accords have provided an opportunity to

move forward, and we were pleased to see progress at the Aqaba and Sharm el-Sheikh meetings earlier in the year ...

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op): This week, a ban was lifted to allow Israeli citizens back into the sites of four settlements in the occupied west bank. The UK must stand firm against any steps towards annexation. ...

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The United Kingdom is opposed to the unilateral annexation of all or any part of the west bank. ...

Peter Gibson (Conservative): ... Since the start of this year, as we have already heard, 15 Israelis have been killed and 70 injured in Palestinian terror attacks, with stabbings, shootings and bombings targeting innocent people. What steps is our Government taking to support Israel in combating terrorism?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: We are appalled by the multiple terror attacks that have killed and injured Israelis and, indeed, Palestinian civilians in the early part of this year. While Israel has a legitimate right to defend itself, it is important that Israeli forces exercise maximum restraint, especially in the use of live fire, when protecting legitimate security interests. ...

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat): The Minister will be aware of the remarks of the Finance Minister, Bezalel Smotrich, saying that the Palestinian village of Huwara should be wiped out. She will also be aware that he has said: "There is no such thing as a Palestinian people."

Denying the existence of a people and calling for villages to be wiped out takes the level of rhetoric to a new level of unacceptability. With people like that now at the heart of the Netanyahu Government, is it not imperative that we do what we can to offer some protection to the Palestinian people by recognising, as a matter of urgency, the Palestinian state?

col 444 **Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** As I have said before, and I am happy to say again, the UK has condemned the Israeli Finance Minister's comments calling for the Palestinian village of Huwara to be wiped out, and his recent comments that deny the existence of the Palestinian people, as well as their right to self-determination, their history and their culture. That is unacceptable ...

Nicola Richards (Conservative): The situation in the region is deeply worrying, yet there is an ever-growing fear about what will happen when Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas leaves the scene after almost two decades in power. Palestinians have borne the brunt of an undemocratic and corrupt Palestinian Authority for years, but the alternatives are likely to be much worse, and terror groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which have been behind much of the recent violence, are likely to attempt to fill the vacuum. What assessment has my right hon. Friend made of the situation?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: We continue to call on Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. The Government have assessed that Hamas in its entirety is concerned in terrorism, and in November 2021 we proscribed the organisation in full. We strongly condemn the incitement in the Hamas-run media and education system, which contributes to a culture of hate. ...

Diana Johnson (Labour): The terror attacks on civilians in the Palestinian territories and in Israel have been a very sharp and terrible reminder of the need to build support for peace among the Palestinian people and the Israeli people. Five years ago, the UK Government expressed support for the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, but there has not been much action since. Does the Minister agree that people-to-people co-existence projects between Israelis and Palestinians represent the best opportunity for building consensus around peace ...

col 445 **Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** I agree with the right hon. Lady that relationships are strengthening through economic and academic ties. ... Through trade agreements that already exist with Israel, and opportunities with the Palestinian

Authority, we are helping those relationships to grow. ...

Scott Benton (Conservative): The tragic escalation of violence that we are witnessing has been stoked by a number of terror actors, including Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas, which are actively seeking to sow the seeds of instability in the region. Guns, explosive devices and financial support have all flooded the region in a clear attempt to undermine the democratic state of Israel. What conversations is the Foreign Office having with regional parties about these subversive activities?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I have set out, the Foreign Secretary speaks regularly with his counterparts, and our ambassador and teams in-country in both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem work very closely day by day with many actors. ...

Andy Slaughter (Labour): Every death in this conflict is a tragedy, so I hope the Minister will disassociate herself from comments from those on her own side who either ignore the deaths of Palestinians or, in relation to Palestinian civilians—including the many children who have been murdered this year—choose to call them “confrontation with the IDF”. That is beyond the pale.

The Minister said that the road map signed this week is out of date, which is candid. It contains no territorial clause, so it opens the way for illegal settlements to be treated as part of green line Israel. Far from raising concerns about the abuse of Palestinian human rights and breaches of international law, it attacks UN bodies for raising those very concerns. ...

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: ... We want to see Israelis and Palestinians able to live together, side by side, and allow their economies and young people to thrive in a peaceful environment. We continue to work at many levels to support that process, as I have set out. The road map sets out a series of work programmes, where we will work together in support of economic and security ties. ... The road map is there to help that work, day to day with citizens, as is the trade agreement with the Occupied Palestinian Territories, to support their economic development.

col 446 **Amy Callaghan (SNP):** Will the Minister finally acknowledge, on the Floor of the House, that Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are subjected to mass, calculated discrimination at the hands of Israeli authorities, and will she urgently halt arms trade to Israel?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I have said, we continue to be deeply troubled by the high number of Palestinian civilians killed and injured. ...

Florence Eshalomi (Labour Co-op): ... Illegal settlements and the eviction of Palestinians from their homes causes unnecessary suffering and deaths and calls into question the two-state solution. Will the Minister clarify her comments in response to my hon. Friend the Member for Enfield, Southgate (Bambos Charalambous). Will she confirm that the road map—a key document to help outline our commitment—mentions the two-state solution?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I said, the road map sets out our intention to strengthen co-operation, across our relationship with Israel, around economic, security and technology ties, and to advance co-operation on the environment and climate change. ...

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op): I am sure the Minister is aware of the almost daily protests in Israel. On 11 March, half a million people came out on the streets across Israel to protest against the proposed Netanyahu judicial reforms, which will end the independent judiciary because the Government will be able to appoint judges, including to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is the last bastion for many Palestinians. It stopped the evictions at Sheikh Jarrah, it put a gate in the separation wall, and it continues to prosecute cases regarding demolitions and settlement expansion. Will the Prime Minister raise with Prime Minister Netanyahu the fact that an independent judiciary is crucial, and a central pillar of any democracy?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: I know the Prime Minister’s team will have heard the hon.

Gentleman's questions, and I will ensure that they are passed on to No.10 later this afternoon.

col 447 Ian Mearns (Labour): ... this cannot be business as usual. Is it time to re-evaluate totally the nature of our intergovernmental relationship with the state of Israel?

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I say, we are appalled by the continuing and increasing terror attacks, which are injuring both Israelis and Palestinians. We continue to share our concerns and support those who are working towards a peaceful resolution.

Kim Johnson (Labour): The Minister has mentioned repeatedly the need for a de-escalation of violence. However, since the election of the most right-wing Government in Israel's history, human rights violations have increased significantly, including the deaths of innocent children. Settlements in the occupied west bank are illegal, and the eviction of Palestinians from their homes causes unnecessary suffering and calls into question the Israeli Government's commitment to a viable two-state solution. Will the Minister outline how she intends to ensure the Israeli Government abide by their obligations under international law? ...

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: As I say, the UK Government continue to ask all parties to take urgent measures to reduce tensions and de-escalate. ...

Marsha De Cordova (Labour): The Government this week announced the 2030 road map for UK-Israel relations. However, the Minister has not answered—she has been asked several times—whether she can confirm that the Government consider the road map to effectively distinguish between green line Israel and illegal settlements, as required by UN National Security resolution 2334? Will the Minister confirm whether the Government undertook any assessment of the road map's compatibility with international law and UN Security Council resolution 2334?

col 448 Anne-Marie Trevelyan: I am not the expert on the detail of the road map. I will ask the Foreign Secretary to ensure that details are placed in the House ...

Jim Shannon (DUP): ... Will the Minister outline what support we are offering to Israeli and Palestine children to learn a different way: not to hate, but to live in compromise? Will she reiterate that the role of our Government and our Ministers is to facilitate the peace and not take sides, reminding certain factions that the words they use in this place can resonate in Israel and can carry difficulties that are paid in blood? ...

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: ... As one practical example of help, we voted to renew the UN Relief and Works Agency's mandate last year. We remain a proud and important supporter of the agency, which provides essential humanitarian support. ... We continue to support it and are working, through the other tools we have, to help sustain it and help people look forward to the opportunities of a peaceful two-state solution, which we will continue to work on.

To read the transcript in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-23/debates/6C08B551-F8ED-42EA-B324-22DDC249C9FD/IsraelAndTheOccupiedPalestinianTerritories>

The Foreign Secretary's comments on 14 March, referred to above, can be read at
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-14/debates/F1ED8FC0-8A54-4AF2-9ED1-4C70AB716251/IsraelAndPalestine#contribution-939BBD87-29EF-4D79-81CD-7E1B92F05DBD>

The Amnesty International report referred to above can be read at
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/MDE1551412022ENGLISH.pdf>

Bezael Smotrich's comments concerning Hawara, referred to above, can be heard at
<https://twitter.com/MatanHodorov/status/1630887014630301696>

A report of Bezael Smotrich's comments concerning the existence of Palestinian people can be read at
<https://www.timesofisrael.com/far-right-lawmaker-bezael-smotrich-declares-himself-his-family-real-palestinians/>

The 2030 Roadmap, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2030-roadmap-for-uk-israel-bilateral-relations/2030-roadmap-for-uk-israel-bilateral-relations>

The Abraham Accords, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/>

The Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research data referred to above can be read at <https://www.pcpsr.org/sites/default/files/Poll%2087%20English%20full%20text%20March2023.pdf>

The UK Government joint statement with the US, France, Germany and Italy 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>

The statement of Government support for the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace referred to above can be read towards the end of col 2017 at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2018-09-06/debates/C4B2E660-3B57-4B75-8028-196F7673C7E6/UnitedNationsGeneralAssembly2018IRCCReport#contribution-B425E335-9D18-481A-BCD5-A4E3A90103FF>

UN Security Council Resolution 2334, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/SRES2334-2016.pdf>

Occupied Palestinian Territories: Illegal Settlements

Anum Qaisar (SNP) [904248] Whether she plans to advise businesses not to trade with illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The Minister of State, Department for Business and Trade (Nigel Huddleston):

The UK has a clear position on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: they are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to peace and the two-state solution. As set out in Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office guidance on overseas business risk, there are clear risks to UK businesses related to economic and financial activities in the settlements and we do not encourage or offer support to such activity.

Anum Qaisar: Ramadan Mubarak to everyone celebrating. In January, the Foreign Secretary told the House that the UK Government's position on the illegality of Israeli settlements remains unchanged. If that is the case, will the UK Government finally suspend trade in goods and services between the UK and companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements? Do the Government understand that if not, the UK is essentially legitimising outposts that clearly violate international law?

Nigel Huddleston: The UK's long-established position on the settlements is clear, as I outlined. The UK does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories as part of Israel, including the illegal settlements. For example, goods originating from illegal Israeli settlements in the west bank, including East Jerusalem, are not entitled to tariff or trade preferences under either the agreement that the UK has with Israel or the agreement between the UK and the Palestinian authorities. I think it is important for the House to recognise that, of course, we also have an agreement with the Palestinian authorities.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-23/debates/4CD25F23-98DA-4B1D-8970-DB3C012FD6A5/OccupiedPalestinianTerritoriesIllegalSettlements>

Topical Questions: Business and Trade

The Secretary of State for Business and Trade (Kemi Badenoch): ... During my visit to Israel this month, I held talks with my counterpart, Nir Barkat, on our upgraded FTA. Israel's economy is booming, its services sector has grown by 45% in the past decade

alone and, while in Israel, I met Teva Pharmaceuticals and Trigo, which are involved in pioneering partnerships with the UK. I also saw the Israeli appetite for British expertise in sectors such as fintech and projects such as the £30 billion Tel Aviv metro. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-23/debates/C7409640-5459-4B08-9BA9-194C457D513A/TopicalQuestions#contribution-297506F9-2CBA-4CB8-AAD4-3242EA1FD39B>

Topical Questions: Business and Trade

Kim Johnson (Labour): Can the Minister explain how the UK can maintain a close and historic friendship with Israel during the current difficulties? Can he let us know what the Prime Minister will do, when he meets the Israeli Prime Minister this weekend, to challenge the sale of goods produced in illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories?

Nigel Huddleston: I refer the hon. Lady to my answer earlier on part of that question. With our friends and allies, including who we trade with, we raise issues and concerns of interest to our constituents and to the British Government on an ongoing basis, not just in trade and business discussions but through other channels and Government Departments. We are happy to have robust conversations with our friends.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-23/debates/C7409640-5459-4B08-9BA9-194C457D513A/TopicalQuestions#contribution-949EA634-23AC-4F6B-9A94-3B9700D7C5D7>

The earlier answer referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-23/debates/4CD25F23-98DA-4B1D-8970-DB3C012FD6A5/OccupiedPalestinianTerritoriesIllegalSettlements>

House of Commons Written Answers

International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [167054] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, on what date he last discussed UK involvement in the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace with his American counterparts.

David Rutley: I [Minister Rutley] refer the honourable member to the comments made by my noble colleague, Lord Goldsmith in the House of Lords on 7 March. The UK government remains in close contact with the US Government about the US Middle East Partnership for Peace Act and how existing peace-building projects and funding can better support the goals of this Act. UK officials last met US counterparts to discuss the fund on 24 February. We share the objective of advancing economic, social, and political connections, and peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians. We stand ready to collaborate and coordinate further, including regarding the fund's advisory board, as additional information about its plans and priorities become available.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-16/167054>

Lord Goldsmith's comments, referred to above, can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-07/debates/4D8A8A9C-2123-40A2-ABA7-CF717B55ACA3/IsraelAndPalestine#contribution-4721B280-33EF-40D3-A32E-E282AE81127D>

International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [167056] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to his oral contribution of 14 March 2023 on Israel and Palestine, Official Report, column 672, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of using alternatives to the International Fund for

Israeli-Palestinian Peace to ensure the most effective use of funding allocated towards people-to-people links.

David Rutley: There is already a range of UK aid-funded development programming in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, outside of what the UK may do in the future with this fund, which works to preserve the prospect of a negotiated two-state solution. It supports stability and the development of a capable and accountable Palestinian Authority that can act as an effective partner for peace with Israel.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-16/167056>

The Foreign Secretary's comments, referred to above, can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-14/debates/F1ED8FC0-8A54-4AF2-9ED1-4C70AB716251/IsraelAndPalestine#contribution-0F1D144B-1A22-4B86-AC46-06E10671672F>

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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>

Notice from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/50527/documents/3209>

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/3203>

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>

Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438>

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

Prospective Scheme of Delegation for the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (closing date 15 May 2023)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-prospective-scheme-delegation-charity-commission-northern-ireland>

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