



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Office for National Statistics

**Sociodemographic differences in the risk of testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), England: 12 September 2020 to 13 December 2021**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/sociodemographicdifferencesintheriskoftestingpositiveforcoronaviruscovid19england/12september2020to13december2021/pdf>

### Police Service of Northern Ireland

**Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland: Update to 30th June 2023**

<https://www.psni.police.uk/system/files/2023-08/1032630886/Hate%20Motivations%20Bulletin%20Period%20ending%2030th%20June%202023.pdf>

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## Israel

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

**The UN Interim Force in Lebanon plays a critical role in maintaining peace and stability: UK Statement at the Security Council**

... The UK is a strong supporter of UNIFIL. It plays a critical role in maintaining peace and stability across the Blue Line ...

We are pleased the language clarifying UNIFIL's long-standing mandate to exercise freedom of movement – which allows UNIFIL to conduct independent patrols and respond quickly to blue-line violations, and was added last year to that end, has been retained. However, it is unacceptable that UNIFIL is still unable to access some locations along the

Blue Line border, including Green Without Borders sites. Particularly given Hezbollah's self-acknowledged stockpiling of weapons in violation of resolution 1701. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-un-interim-force-in-lebanon-plays-a-critical-role-in-maintaining-peace-and-stability-uk-statement-at-the-security-council>

## United Nations

### **Case Before International Court of Justice Will Expose Israel's Prolonged Illegal Policies, Permanent Observer Tells Palestinian Rights Committee**

Highlighting the international community's paralysis and lack of progress to hold Israel accountable for its actions, the Permanent Observer reported on preparations for the case being brought before the International Court of Justice that exposes Israel's prolonged illegal practices and policies that deny the Palestinian people's right to self-determination ...

The Palestinian people are outraged by the lack of progress in putting an end to their tragedies, declared Riyad H. Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of Palestinians killed this year has already exceeded the number of those killed in 2022; this includes 44 children. Yet, the Secretary-General in his report on children in armed conflict did not list Israel as a country violating children's rights, he said.

"The current Israeli Government is the most extreme rightist Government in the history of the Governments of Israel," he observed. It includes fascist ministers considered by the Israeli legal system as promoting terrorism. One such minister who has advanced a racist manifesto also announced that his and his family's right to remain alive is greater than the right of the Palestinian people to circulate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. ...

Moreover, the settlement enterprise is being intensified and the besieging of the Gaza Strip continues, threatening the 2 million people who live in that "manmade huge prison", he said, adding: "This is the reality on the ground that we are struggling against." He decried the paralysis of the international community, including the Security Council, that reiterates principled positions but does not take practical steps to hold Israel accountable and force it to honour its commitments under the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with resolutions and international law. ...

As the floor opened for comments, Pedro Pedroso (Cuba), Committee [on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People] Vice-Chair ... called the tacit extermination of the Palestinian people and denial of their rights, evicting them from their land in "a process of ethnic cleansing" ...

Jordan's representative stressed the need for the international community to stop the dangerous escalation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Israeli incursions into Palestinian cities, seizing of lands and displacement of people. His country continues to exercise its historic role as custodian of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem and take all measures to maintain the historic and legal status quo, he said, affirming that a just and lasting peace requires the end of the occupation and establishment of an independent Palestinian State along the 1967 lines with East Jerusalem as its capital. ...

Michael Lynk, former Special Rapporteur, then briefed the Committee on the study it commissioned regarding the legality of the Israeli occupation ... While many features of the 56-year-old Israeli occupation are illegal in themselves, the study's central aim is to answer the question of whether the occupation itself is illegal and — if so — to outline the consequences for Israel, the international community and the United Nations. ...

... the study finds many parallels between the situation in the State of Palestine today and South Africa's apartheid rule over Namibia 50 years ago. Due to the illegality of its occupation, Israel is obliged to withdraw from the Occupied Palestinian Territory

immediately, completely and unconditionally. Further, Israel is responsible for reparations. The international community must move away from the “land-for-peace” paradigm and towards Israel’s complete withdrawal to the 1967 lines.

“These are powerful findings,” he stressed, noting that the study addresses the questions that will be put before the International Court of Justice. It will also resonate in political, diplomatic and intellectual circles around the world because it is one of the most comprehensive reports on occupation, decolonization and self-determination ever published by the United Nations ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/gapal1454.doc.htm>

### **Study on the Legality of the Israeli Occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem**

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ceirpp-legal-study2023/>

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### **Adopting Resolution 2695 (2023), Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for One Year**

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) until 31 August 2024 ...

... the Council condemned all violations of the Blue Line — both by air and ground — and strongly called on all parties to respect their obligations under international law as well as the cessation of hostilities, to prevent any violation of the Blue Line and to respect it in its entirety, and to cooperate fully with the United Nations and UNIFIL. ...

It also urged all parties to make tangible progress towards a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution ...

**James Kariuki (United Kingdom)** ... welcomed the language clarifying UNIFIL’s long-standing mandate to exercise freedom of movement that allows it to respond quickly to Blue Line violations. However, it is unacceptable that UNIFIL is unable to access some locations along the Blue Line border, particularly given Hizbullah’s self-acknowledged stockpiling of weapons. ... [[click here](#) to read this speech in more detail]

**Vassily A. Nebenzia (Russian Federation)** ... expressed hope that today’s resolution “will not complicate the situation in Lebanon” ...

**Lana Zaki Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates)** warned that tensions on the Blue Line are at a level unseen since the 2006 war. Over the past year, on a daily basis, Hizbullah has been making a mockery of resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004). It has erected observation towers, conducted military drills with live fire and prevented UNIFIL’s freedom of movement while brazenly attacking peacekeeping forces. It has also actively perpetuated Lebanon’s myriad crises, obstructed the investigation into the devastating Beirut port explosion and paralysed key State institutions. “These extremely inflammatory actions threaten a dangerous escalation in our region”, she emphasized, stressing the need to ensure that UNIFIL’s mandate addresses development on the ground. ...

**Linda Thomas-Greenfield (United States)** ... [said] UNIFIL’s inability to access several illegal sites which facilitate Hizbullah’s operations in southern Lebanon along the Blue Line hinders the Interim Force’s ability to reduce the likelihood of conflict. ... she said her country will continue to support Lebanese civil-society organizations protecting Lebanon’s environment while “relentlessly pursuing Hizbullah and its support networks”.

**Jeanne Mrad (Lebanon)** ... stressed the demand of having peacekeeping troops on the ground in Lebanon. Regrettably, the text did not reflect all of Lebanon’s concerns, failing to take into consideration the particular characteristic of the situation. “This particularity is called sovereignty,” she said, underscoring that Lebanon has never rejected or denounced the principle of UNIFIL’s freedom of movement. ...

## **Relevant Legislation** \*\* new or updated today

### **UK Parliament**

#### **\*\* Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475>

Amendment paper

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0325/amend/econactivity\\_rm\\_pbc\\_0904.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0325/amend/econactivity_rm_pbc_0904.pdf)

#### **Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

#### **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>

#### **Nakba Commemoration Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3461>

#### **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

#### **Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

#### **Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)**

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

#### **Schools Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

#### **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-draft-bill-overarching-documents>

#### **Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

## Universal Jurisdiction (Extension)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454>

## Scottish Parliament

### \*\* Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

Scottish Government: Gender recognition reform: Section 35 order challenge - petition as adjusted 9 August 2023

<https://tinyurl.com/5886fk7r>

Scottish Government: Gender recognition reform: Section 35 Order challenge - note of argument for the Scottish Ministers

<https://tinyurl.com/cjftm7th>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

**Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill** (closing date not specified – no later than 14 September 2023 but may be earlier)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2023/july-2023/economic-activity-of-public-bodies-overseas-matters-bill-call-for-evidence/>

**UK international development white paper** (closing date 16 September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-international-development-white-paper-call-for-evidence/uk-international-development-white-paper-call-for-evidence>

**Drug Use in Ethnic Minority Groups Review** (closing date 22 September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/drug-use-in-ethnic-minority-groups/drug-use-in-ethnic-minority-groups-call-for-evidence>

**A Human Rights Bill for Scotland** (closing date 5 October 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/equality-and-human-rights/a-human-rights-bill-for-scotland-consultation/>

**The future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales** (closing date 26 October 2023)

<https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

**Management of burial grounds, application for burial, exhumation, private burial and restoration of lairs: regulation in Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/regulation-burial-scotland/>

**Statutory inspection of burial authorities, cremation authorities and funeral directors** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/statutory-inspection-burial-authorities/>

**Funeral director licensing scheme for Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/licensing-funeral-directors-scotland/>

**\*\* Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) [Northern Ireland]** (closing date 24 November 2023)

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/consultations/relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-consultation>

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