



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Schools: Racial Discrimination

Matt Vickers (Conservative) [181804] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to tackle racism in schools.

Claire Coutinho: The government condemns and strives to tackle all forms of racial discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools have a duty to take steps to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all protected characteristics, including between people of different ethnic backgrounds. The department has published advice to support schools to fulfil their duties under the Equalities Act 2010, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools?msclkid=9ce22dddcc5d11ec9a0a2d6e2fd0a666>

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils should be taught about different societies, and how different groups have contributed to the development of Britain, and this can include experiences and voices of people from all backgrounds. The curriculum offers many opportunities for schools to do this, notably through citizenship education and relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). The RSHE curriculum has a strong focus on equality, respect, the harmful impact of stereotyping, as well as the importance of valuing difference. Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>

Schools should address any intolerant, racist or discriminatory views expressed by pupils through their wider anti-bullying and safeguarding policies. All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy which outlines measures to encourage good behaviour, and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. The policy should set out the behaviour expected of pupils, the sanctions that will be imposed for misbehaviour, and recognition for good behaviour. This should be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents. The department's advice for schools, which outlines schools' responsibilities, is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

The department publishes information, guidance and support for teachers and school leaders on how to challenge radical views, including racist and discriminatory beliefs, on the Educate Against Hate website. This includes the Respectful School Communities toolkit, a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline. This can help to combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind, including hate-based bullying, and is available here:

<https://www.educateagainsthate.com/school-leaders/?filter=guidance-and-training-school-leaders>

The department is also providing over £3 million of funding between August 2021 and March 2024, to five anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. We have deliberately focused this grant programme on preventing and tackling bullying of pupils with protected characteristics. This includes projects targeting the bullying of particular vulnerable groups, such as those who are victims of hate related bullying.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-19/181804>

Home Office

Martyn's Law progresses as government publishes draft legislation

The draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill sets out the requirements that, under Martyn's Law, venues and other organisations will have to meet to ensure public safety. ... The draft bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Home Affairs Select Committee, ahead of formal introduction.

In December 2022, the government announced that Martyn's Law will introduce a tiered model for certain locations depending on the capacity of the premises or event and the activity taking place, to prevent unnecessary burden to business. The legislation will ensure venues are prepared for, and ready to respond in the event of, an attack.

Security Minister Tom Tugendhat said: The threat from terrorism is enduring. In recent years, we have seen terrorists target the public at a broad range of locations, causing deaths and casualties amongst innocent people going about their everyday lives. ...

The government is committed to working closely with businesses and other stakeholders to ensure this legislation is proportionate whilst also being effective. ...

The standard tier will apply to public premises with a maximum capacity of 100 or more people, whilst the enhanced tier applies to public premises and events with a maximum capacity of 800 or more people. Limited exemptions to the capacity requirements apply to education establishments and places of worship. Guidance and training materials will also be available to premises with a capacity of under 100, should they want additional support. Standard tier premises will be required to undertake basic, low-cost activities to improve their preparedness, including terrorism protection training and evaluating the best procedures to put in place in order to minimise impact.

Enhanced tier premises and events have further requirements in recognition of the potential consequences of a successful attack. This will include appointing a designated senior officer who must regularly review the security of the venue.

An inspection and enforcement regime will be established to promote the requirements for each tier. In the event of non-compliance, sanctions and ultimately penalties will be issued to premises.

Martyn's Law will extend to and apply across the whole of the United Kingdom ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/martyns-law-progresses-as-government-publishes-draft-legislation>

Protect Duty: Consultation Outcome – Government response

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protect-duty/outcome/government-response-document>

Protect Duty: Consultation Outcome – Annex B: summary of responses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protect-duty/outcome/annex-b-summary-of-responses-accessible>

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Israel

House of Commons Oral Answers

Israel and Palestine

Alex Davies-Jones (Labour) [904712] What assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of recent violence in Israel and Palestine.

Tommy Sheppard (SNP) [904714] Whether he has had recent discussions with his Israeli counterpart on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (James Cleverly): Our strong bilateral relationship with Israel means that we can speak frankly with the Israelis, and whenever I do so I encourage them to ensure that security operations are carried out proportionately and in accordance with international law. I call on all parties to find opportunities to de-escalate tension. On 7 April, I condemned the indiscriminate rocket attacks directed at Israel, and I also condemned the horrific murder of Lucy, Maia and Rina Dee by a terrorist. My deepest condolences go to Rabbi Leo Dee and his family. The UK remains committed to a two-state solution, and we consistently engage with Israel and the leadership of the Palestinian Authority to support that goal.

Alex Davies-Jones: I share the sentiments of the Foreign Secretary, but last year was the deadliest year for violence in the west bank since 2005 and the cycle of violence continues. There are some trailblazing organisations working in the region using cutting-edge science and artificial intelligence technology to encourage peace and an end to the bloodshed. What recent conversations have Ministers or the Secretary of State had with their colleagues in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology about the value of those collaborative projects and their impact on a two-state solution?

James Cleverly: I thank the hon. Lady for the points she has put forward. I will endeavour to speak with the Secretary of State or Ministers in that Department. We will constantly explore opportunities to enhance peace and strive towards a sustainable two-state solution, whether through the most traditional people-to-people approach or through the use of AI. Whatever it takes, we are willing to consider it.

Tommy Sheppard: The Foreign Secretary mentioned the two-state solution. Now that it is the policy of the Israeli Government not to pursue a two-state solution, can he explain how the discussions on trade with Israel will be used to pursue that policy objective and to uphold human rights and international law in the occupied territories?

James Cleverly: The UK enjoys a trade relationship with Israel; indeed, we have a trade agreement with the Occupied Palestinian Territories as well. We will always put human rights and the pursuit of peace at the heart of our foreign policy when it comes to Israel and the OPTs. We will continue to hold our position on the desirability of a two-state solution and we will continue, in our interactions with the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority, to pursue that aim.

Mark Pritchard (Conservative): Does the Foreign Secretary agree that the Abraham accords are a huge breakthrough in diplomatic dialogue in the region, that they are a force for good and that they are creating conversations between people who previously did not speak and join together around the same table? Is it not the case that the Palestinian leadership should recognise that the region is changing and that they need to get on board and work with their friends, allies and partners in the region to try to understand the differences of opinion across the region?

James Cleverly: My right hon. Friend makes an incredibly important point about the changing dynamic in the region. I am very pleased that the Abraham accords were signed. More than being just a single point in time, the accords have unlocked a series of dialogues between countries in the Arab world and Israel. They have also formalised relationships that perhaps would have been informal up until this point, and they are a fantastic stepping-stone towards wider regional security and that peaceful, sustainable two-state solution.

Stephen Crabb (Conservative): Aside from the violent incidents that my right hon. Friend has referred to, does he agree that the fact that more than 1 million worshippers were able to visit the Temple Mount during Ramadan and that the month of April saw the great festivals of Easter, Passover and Ramadan being celebrated so freely throughout Israel marks Israel out as a remarkable example of religious freedom and tolerance in the middle east?

James Cleverly: On my visit to Israel, I saw people of all religions living their lives freely there, and that is to be commended. Through this rare period when the three great religions celebrate these significant events at the same time of the year—I think these festivals converge once every 33 years—I had extensive conversations with the Israeli leadership, the Palestinian leadership and leadership in the region. I am pleased that opportunities were taken to de-escalate and to support religious freedom. That will always be something that we champion in our relationships. ...

Bambos Charalambous (Labour): Last week, the British Consulate General in Jerusalem, joined by other European missions, visited Jubbet ahd-Dhib school near Bethlehem, which along with 58 other schools in the west bank and Jerusalem is at risk of demolition, and implored the Israeli Government to “reverse the demolition order and protect the right to education for all.”

Considering the possibility of violence occurring as a result of such demolitions and the impact of demolishing schools on children in the west bank and East Jerusalem, will the Secretary of State join the calls to demand that Israel reverse these demolition orders? Can he also tell me what steps he is taking to protect the viability of a two-state solution?

James Cleverly: As I said in answer to an earlier question, one of the advantages of the strong bilateral relationship that we have with Israel is that we are able to speak regularly about such sensitive issues. Israel knows the UK’s long-standing position on settlements, evictions and demolitions, which is clear: they are illegal under international law and they limit the chances of success of a two-state solution. We raise that directly with Israel, and Israel listens when we do.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/3BAAD8A0-5224-48C4-B78A-44EB069C3A6D/IsraelAndPalestine>

The Foreign Minister’s statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/calls-for-de-escalation-at-jerusalems-holy-sites-foreign-secretary-statement>

The condemnation of the murder of Lucy, Maia and Rina Dee, referred to above, can be read at

<https://twitter.com/odedrevivi/status/1646728913895211011/photo/1>

The Abraham Accords, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/>

The British Consulate General statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.facebook.com/BritishConsulateJerusalem/posts/pfbid0N4zE1DQxk8TxyU2tT TXozXtLK9YpJAsqNdiCvRKN6Gjj11tZuTxm9dAGhaJFKWjbl>

Occupied Territories: Ban on Imports

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat) [904726] If he will have discussions with the Secretary of State for Business and Trade on the potential merits of implementing a ban on importing goods produced in occupied territories.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (David Rutley): The UK has no plans to ban imports from the Occupied Palestinian Territories. However, goods imported from the settlements are not entitled to preferential treatment under the UK-Israel trade and partnership agreement, and the UK also supports accurate labelling of settlement goods so as not to mislead the consumer. The UK's position on settlements is clear: they are illegal under international law and present an obstacle to peace.

Alistair Carmichael: I think it would be uncontroversial to say that we would not import goods from Crimea, so why it should be any different when we are dealing with the Occupied Palestinian Territories, I simply do not understand. Looking forward to any future trade agreement with Israel, can the Minister assure me that any such agreement would include a clear territoriality clause to specify that it applied only to the sovereign state of Israel, and not to any part of those territories occupied by her in 1967?

David Rutley: Only Israeli goods originating from the state of Israel will be covered by the new UK-Israel free trade agreement.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/E70FF68B-D3E4-4D00-959A-700A22E4CE1A/OccupiedTerritoriesBanOnImports>

Topical Questions: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour): Under the new Israeli coalition Government, which contains far-right elements, violence against Palestinians has escalated, including Israeli forces attacking Muslim worshippers at the al-Aqsa mosque and attacks against Palestinian Christians at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We must condemn all forms of violence, including the devastating murder of three British Jewish citizens, but does the Secretary of State agree that the cycle of violence will not end and there will be no prospect of a lasting peace if the occupying forces are busy building more illegal settlements and trying to evict and oppress an entire people?

James Cleverly: I am not sure the hon. Gentleman was in his place during my earlier response, but our position on settlement demolitions is long-standing. We believe they are illegal under international law and undermine the best possible chances of a sustainable, peaceful two-state solution.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/89E558E4-1D37-41C2-BF25-139FC273CE60/TopicalQuestions#contribution-8FEF4CCF-E7ED-475B-A920-EB97EDD6B338>

Topical Questions: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Andy Slaughter (Labour) [904740] On 15 May, it will be 75 years since the Nakba—the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and the destruction of 500 Palestinian villages. Given Britain's historical role in Palestine, what message does the Foreign Secretary have on this anniversary for the millions of displaced Palestinians in the occupied territories, refugee camps and the wider diaspora?

James Cleverly: The UK's position on this is of long standing, and I have discussed it at the Dispatch Box today. We strive to create or to support the creation of a sustainable two-state solution so that the Palestinian people and the Israeli people have safe homes in which they can live, and that will remain the cornerstone of UK foreign policy in the region.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/89E558E4-1D37-41C2-BF25-139FC273CE60/TopicalQuestions#contribution-99C955B9-DAEF-4CAE-B036-9CD53C5EA39A>

Topical Questions: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Kim Leadbeater (Labour) [904743] It is almost a year since the killing of the Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in the Jenin refugee camp. Will the Foreign Secretary join me in supporting her brother Anton's call for a thorough independent investigation into her death, and agree with me that that is now long overdue?

James Cleverly: It is tragic when we see the loss of life in the region. We always call for the swift and transparent investigation of any fatalities, and that is very much at the heart of our policy. I will ensure that I get more details on the case the hon. Member has raised. I was familiar with it at the time, but I will make sure I am back up to speed with that.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/89E558E4-1D37-41C2-BF25-139FC273CE60/TopicalQuestions#contribution-E0977F61-4E4D-4E8B-A9E9-AE892580E38C>

Department for Business and Trade

Updated Trade and Investment factsheet: Israel

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1153699/israel-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-05-03.pdf

Updated Trade and Investment factsheet: Occupied Palestinian Territories

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1153754/occupied-palestinian-territories-trade-and-investment-factsheet-2023-05-03.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>

Commons consideration of Lords message

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/C02210A8-900E-4AC9-B8CF-ABC5D82196B9/HigherEducation\(FreedomOfSpeech\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-05-02/debates/C02210A8-900E-4AC9-B8CF-ABC5D82196B9/HigherEducation(FreedomOfSpeech)Bill)

Notice of amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0279/amend/highered_day_cclm_0502.pdf

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>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-05-02/debates/C4ADB2FF-C4AE-4BEA-8E30-A341ECF32822/OnlineSafetyBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-05-02/debates/78C7231A-3F91-438E-ABCF-21E577D0EB73/OnlineSafetyBill>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/50911/documents/3356>

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>

Draft Bill as published

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154100/Terrorism_Protection_of_Premises_Draft_Bill_-_Command_Paper.pdf

Explanatory Notes

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154120/230501_Explanatory_Notes_-_Terrorism_Protection_of_Premises_Bill_002_.pdf

Letter from Tom Tugendhat, Security Minister, to Dame Diana Johnson, Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154112/Letter_from_Security_Minister_to_HASC_-_Martyn_s_Law_FINAL.pdf

Impact Assessment

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154338/2023-04-25_Martyn_s_Law_Impact_Assessment.pdf

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

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>

Supporting earlier resolution of private family law arrangements (closing date 15 June 2023)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/private-family-law-consultation/>

Review of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (closing date 18 June 2023)

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-review-race-relations-ni-order-1997>

Charities tax compliance (closing date 20 July 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/charities-tax-compliance/consultation-charities-tax-compliance>

JPR 2023 Antisemitism in the UK Survey (closing date not stated)

<https://www.jpr.org.uk/panel/UKantisemitism2023> (UK except Scotland)

and

<https://bit.ly/3Vg7DDH> (Scotland)

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