



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

James Cleverly Today I've seen a glimpse of what millions experience every day. The threat of Hamas rockets lingers over every Israeli man, woman and child. This is why we are standing shoulder to shoulder with Israel. [plus video]

<https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1712143480045068695>

James Cleverly We stand with [Israeli flag] I'm here in Israel today to show that the UK's support for the Israeli people is unwavering. נחמנו ונתחזק [plus photo]

<https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1712105459706995064>

Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Michelle Donelan MP I've called an urgent meeting with social media companies to ensure action is taken to swiftly remove any violent content fuelled by Hamas' acts of terrorism in Israel from their platforms. We are taking action to stand in solidarity with Israel and our Jewish community.

<https://twitter.com/michelledonelan/status/1711831235666805150>

Welsh Senedd Statement by the Llywydd

The Llywydd [Elin Jones]: ... we'd like to take a few seconds to reflect on what's happening in the middle east, and that we have all been horrified by these most recent events. And therefore, to reflect on that, I will now invite all the party leaders to contribute their thoughts on these events. ...

Mark Drakeford [The First Minister]: ... This weekend brought a terrible escalation in the violence against Israel, and this week has seen that violence continue and widen. The events are shocking and appalling. As we sit here in this Chamber, children, older people and the civilian population in Israel and in Gaza are in vivid fear for their lives, while grieving for those already lost. And the impact of those events is not confined to the streets of Israel

and Gaza—they have a real impact here in Wales, in our own communities, and our thoughts are with all of those caught up in this enduring cycle of violence. We condemn of course the perpetrators of these attacks, which have taken the lives of so many innocent civilians. But condemnation alone is not enough. A two-state solution is the policy of the UK Government and of the United Nations. Beyond the horror of the coming days, the international community must come together to work again for a lasting peace, a secure peace, a peace that reaches into the everyday lives of the Israeli and the Palestinian people. And hard as it is, and made harder yet by the war that continues to unfold, the only path to a better future has to be a path of peace.

Andrew RT Davies (Conservative): ... I think many of us when we woke up on Saturday morning and we saw the images coming from Israel were aghast at what was unfolding before us. We all know that that part of the world is a very volatile place, but to see the activities of the terrorist organisation Hamas break through the border and actually murder women, children and old people in their homes and in their community settings is something that we all deplore, and rightly so. And we must all support Israel's right of defence and making sure that its international borders are recognised and, ultimately, protected. What we also must remember is that, as the First Minister highlighted, as we sit in this Chamber here today, there are people cowering in basements, in community settings because missiles and rockets are going off indiscriminately, both in Israel and the Gaza Strip.

And it is something that we as a country, the United Kingdom, and the international community, and us here in Wales must redouble our efforts to bring peace to the communities that live in that part of the world. Because without peace in the middle east, we do not have peace across the globe. And to see the suffering, to see the anguish, and to see the horror must fill us all to make sure that we double our efforts to bring that peace, a lasting peace, to that part of the globe. And the one image I would ask all Members to reflect on is the image on the front page of *The Times* today of a family of three young children, a father and a mother, who were slaughtered, who were slaughtered, on the weekend because they happened to be Israelis. That is something that none of us, none of us, should stand by and condone, and we must make sure that we redouble our efforts to support Israel's right to self-determination, to protect its borders. We support the civilians in the Palestinian community who abhor what Hamas is doing, supposedly in their name, which I would argue is not being done in their name, and make sure that we stand shoulder to shoulder where this violence is inflicting such multiple misery and suffering, so that we can enjoy the peace that the First Minister has talked about, and the peace that we all want to see.

Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru): The events over the past few days in the middle east have shaken us all. We today think about everyone who has been affected directly by this, about the lives that have been lost, and we think of everyone of Israeli and Palestinian heritage in Wales who has been suffering while watching the events of the past few days. We in Plaid Cymru and everyone in the Senedd can always unite in our condemnation of violence against our fellow man. We condemn the attacks by Hamas, and today we urge the international community to work together swiftly to persuade the relevant powers to introduce a ceasefire to allow the release of those held in Gaza against their will.

We also believe that the way that the Israeli Government has placed Gaza under siege, ceasing water and energy supplies, is impossible to justify. Ordinary Palestinians, of course, have been let down by the international community and have suffered years of violence and injustice. Now people on both sides of the border are losing their lives again in heartbreaking circumstances. Worsening the violence is not the solution. The indiscriminate attacks on citizens will do nothing to alleviate tensions. The suffering facing ordinary people from all beliefs in this violent conflict have touched us all, and our thoughts are with each and every one of them in another dark chapter in the history of the region.

Jane Dodds (Liberal Democrat): ... Our thoughts are with all those whose lives have

been impacted by this tragic violence. We fully condemn the terrorism of Hamas and Islamic jihad. I echo the comments of Layla Moran, the Liberal Democrat spokesperson on foreign affairs, herself of Palestinian descent, who said that civilians must be protected, and that we are especially horrified to hear about hostage taking, and that we condemn all of the violence. This is sadly a significant escalation. The United Nations said, 'In conflict, civilians always pay the highest price. War is not the answer. We need peace.'

To finish, I hope and pray that all efforts from everyone, everywhere will concentrate on negotiations, peace, safety and protection of all caught up in this horrendous conflict. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://record.senedd.wales/Plenary/13520#A700000759>

Welsh Senedd Statement of Opinion

Darren Millar (Conservative) [OPIN-2023-0369] Hamas Attacks on Israel – This Senedd:

1. Condemns the attacks, violence and acts of terror perpetrated by Hamas against Israel in recent days.
2. Calls for an end to the targeting, killing and kidnapping of innocent civilians.
3. Regrets the loss of innocent lives and casualties in Israel and Gaza.
4. Extends the deepest sympathy of people across Wales to those who have lost loved ones.
5. Recognises the right of the State of Israel to defend itself and its citizens.
6. Urges political leaders in Israel and Palestine to urgently work to bring an end to the conflict and engage with the international community to negotiate a lasting peace settlement.

<https://record.senedd.wales/StatementOfOpinion/369>

European Council

Co-Chairs' Statement of the 27th GCC-EU Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting

... 21. The Joint Council expressed deep concern about the grave developments in Israel and Gaza and condemned all attacks against civilians. It called for the protection of civilians, reminding the parties of their obligations under the universal principles of international humanitarian law. It further called for restraint, the release of hostages and allowing access to food, water and medicines according to International Humanitarian Law, stressing the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis to avoid repeating this vicious cycle of violence. The EU and the GCC Ministers are resolved to deplore violence and urge restraint and calm on all sides and agreed to continue consultations and to remain engaged. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/10/10/co-chairs-statement-of-the-27th-gcc-eu-joint-council-and-ministerial-meeting>

European Union

Israel/Gaza: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell after informal meeting of EU Foreign Affairs Ministers

... ministers have endorsed our [Communication](#) with the Gulf [Cooperation Council] ... condemnation of terrorist attack, condemnation of any attack against civilians; release of hostages; protection of civilians; respect of international humanitarian law - and it means

no blockage of water, food, or electricity to the civil population in Gaza - to open humanitarian corridors; to facilitate people who have to escape the bombing from Gaza. They could leave the country through Egypt – because the Israeli border is closed.

... it is the fourth time in my life that I witness a war in Gaza, the bombing of Gaza, and terrorist actions which have been retaliated by Israel on their right of defence. All ministers insisted on the idea that this has to be done according to international humanitarian law. But we have to think also about what will happen after.

For that we have to increase our cooperation with the Arab world. And we have to recalibrate and upgrade the initiative that we took some months ago together with the League of Arab States, with Egypt, with Jordan, with Saudi Arabia, in order to revive the Arab Peace Plan and to remind the world that the Palestinian problem still exists, that to make peace between Arab countries and Israel is good and necessary, but peace has also to be done with the Palestinians. ...

Israel has the right to defend [itself], but it has to be done according to the right of international law, humanitarian law. Some decisions are against this international law. ...

We discussed about how to continue our relationship with the Palestinian Authority. It was a clear distinction between Hamas, the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian Authority. We consider Hamas a terrorist organisation and what they have done shows – certainly – that they behave like this.

But the Palestinian Authority is another thing. The Palestinian Authority is our partner. We do not deal with Hamas, but yes, we support, we work, and we deal together with the Palestinian Authority. And not all the Palestinian people are terrorists. So, a collective punishment against all Palestinians will be unfair and unproductive. ...

By the way, if ... we discover that we have been funding Hamas terrorist activities, someone will have to take a political responsibility for that. I do not believe it happens, but let's check it. ... But Member States – many Member States – insisted on the idea that this can not to be an excuse for delaying our cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, and the payments should not be impeded by these processes. ...

All in all, this barbaric and terrorist attack, that has caused so many casualties, so many people being killed, that has provoked a reaction from the Israeli Defence Forces, that will also cause human suffering – we insist that this has to be done according to humanitarian law, but the fact is that, at the moment, the casualties in Gaza are also increasing. 150,000 people are internally displaced, and the humanitarian situation is dire. So, we will have to support more, not less. More.

This is, I think, the 95% of the positions expressed by Member States here ...

Q. *You said that Israel has the right to defend following international law. Do you think they have actually followed international law with all the things they have done to the Palestinians?*

As I said, some of their actions, and the United Nations have already said that, like cutting water, cutting electricity and food to a mass of civilian people, is against international law. ... That is a critical moment in which the reaction to the barbaric attack perpetrated by Hamas provokes a situation, in which we have to remember that the right to defence, has to be done within the international law. ...

Q. *What do the Ministers think of Commissioner [for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér] Várhelyi regarding the suspension of development aid?*

... the overwhelming majority was against the idea or the proposal of suspending the payments to the Palestinian Authority. ... If they consider that a review has to be done, we will do a review, but this does not mean that support to the Palestinian Authority has been suspended or the payments cancelled.

To read the full press release see

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/israelgaza-press-remarks-high-representative-josep-borrell-after-informal-meeting-eu-foreign-affairs_en

EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell at the joint press conference with GCC Secretary General, Jassem Al Budaiwi and Omani Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sayyid Al Busaidi

... There have been tragic moments in the history of the Middle East. What has happened since Saturday morning is shocking, for the suffering that this attack launched by Hamas has caused – and continues to cause – to innocent civilians, and the negative impact this will have on the possibility for the two people to live side by side in peace and security.

Since last Saturday, I spoke to the Palestinian Prime Minister [Mohammad Shtayyeh] to ask the Palestinian Authority to contribute to immediate cessation of hostilities and promote the interest of the Palestinian people and the aspiration of the whole region to security and stability.

I also spoke to the Israeli Foreign Minister, Eli Cohen, to express the solidarity of the European Union, in front to these terrible terrorist attacks, our strong condemnation of violence and terror and express the need to respect international humanitarian law and to prevent more civilian lives [from] being lost.

I spoke to many others in the Gulf and to other partners in the region.

And today, we agreed that the priority is to cease violence and to prevent further regional escalation. It is of utmost importance to ensure the release of hostages, as well as the protection of civilians at all times and by all parties. ...

The European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council Ministers are resolved to deploy a violent and urgent restraint[t] and calm on all sides and agreed to continue consultations and to remain engaged.

The Council supports the initiative taken by Saudi Arabia, the European Union, the League of Arab States, together with Egypt and Jordan, to revise the Middle East Peace Process. We reiterated our commitment to a two-state solution, because it is the only solution. ... Based in 1977 lines in accordance with Arab Peace Initiative and relevant United Nations resolutions. ...

Q. Does the EU in its meeting today, are you going to take effective measures to pressure Israel to stop their attacks on the civilians especially with the great escalation that we have seen with the airstrikes yesterday, and yesterday night?

... if we condemn all attacks against civilians, and all means all, [we] call for the protection of civilians, and remind the obligation of fulfilling universal principles of international humanitarian law. It means that when [on] the ground Israel has the right to defend [itself] - certainly it has [it], but it has to be implemented according with the principles of international humanitarian law and we call for the release of hostages, and we call for the access to food, water, medicines which is also according to international humanitarian law; and we call for a need for a political solution, that could avoid once and again this cycle of violence. And certainly, we reject the terrorism acts that have created so much pain and, certainly from our understanding, not support the Palestinian cause. ...

I want to ... diffuse some false information about for example that Germany was going to cancel the support to the Palestinian authority. The German Ministers has clearly stated that this was not the case at all, that Germany will continue providing the support. ... it has already been clarified that there will not be suspension of the due payments to funds to Palestine from the European Union Commission.

To read the full press release see

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-gcc-joint-council-and-ministerial-meeting-press-remarks-high-representative-josep-borrell-joint_en

Highlighting Hamas' Recent Attack on Israel, Third Committee Expresses Dismay at Rise in Conflict Victims, Racism, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia Worldwide

... **Volker Türk, High Commissioner for Human Rights** ... expressed deep shock over the horrific attacks launched by Palestinian armed groups on Saturday and the ensuing full-blown conflict in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Civilians on both sides bear an intolerable brunt, he said, urgently appealing to all parties to pull back from total warfare and the vicious cycles of vengeance, which decades of experience have shown will have disastrous and possibly irreparable long-term effects on peace and security for everyone - in Israel, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, across the region and beyond. Presenting his report ... he said human rights measures are the only way to make development inclusive, participatory and sustainable; the only way to shape laws that are just and to ensure accountability, promote reconciliation and a path away from conflict. ... However, he continued, one quarter of humanity lives in places affected by conflict ... Racism and gender-based discrimination – notably against women and girls – are also rising, with concerted pushbacks against the important progress made in recent decades. Social media platforms, when unchecked, have also become delivery systems for vicious hate speech against women and girls, people of African descent, LGBTIQ+ people and many other minority groups. He voiced particular concern about the rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. ...

The representative of the United States condemned the attacks on Israel by the terrorist organization Hamas, noting that Israel has a right to defend itself. Calling the attack unjustified, he said that such attacks prevent the fulfillment of human rights. Either there is the path of dialogue and conflict resolution or the path of terrorism, he said, noting that Hamas destroys lives, including Palestinian lives. ...

The representative of Canada condemned Hamas' multifront terror attack against Israelis citizens. Support for Palestinian self-determination or empathy for Palestinians must not obscure the fact that Hamas is an anti-Semitic terrorist group that wants to wipe Israel off the map, he said. The litany of intensifying abuses should concern all States, he added. ...

The representative of the United Kingdom highlighted the tragic events in Israel, condemning Hamas' terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens and called for an end to such attacks. Hamas' indiscriminate use of violence is horrific and taking more than 100 hostages is heinous. The United Kingdom stands by Israel's right to self-defense, noting that Hamas does not represent the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and that their acts have resulted in the deaths of 687 Palestinians in Gaza, adding to their suffering. ...

The representative of Israel ... asked: "How many murdered Jews does it take for you to support Israel's right to self-defence?" Emphasizing that the High Commissioner's role is not to be a "bystander expressing his emotions", he stressed: "We need you to take action." He further questioned: "How do you expect Israel to ensure that these genocidal jihadists never commit these atrocities again? Should we invite them to our living room for a civilized chat?" Emphasizing that the Human Rights Council has "lost its moral compass", he said that the world cannot accept a "distorted moral standard" that guarantees that such atrocities will continue. "Israel will obliterate [the] Hamas terror infrastructure," he asserted. ...

The observer for the State of Palestine said that Israel's war minister has ordered a complete siege of the Gaza Strip, calling on Member States to reject such collective punishment. Spotlighting that over 850 Palestinians have been killed, he stressed: "We regret that some still have difficulties to acknowledge Palestinian victims killed by Israel." Recalling that Israel has imposed a 17-year blockade, he added: "Now it is telling you that killing more Palestinians, including children, is the answer." Also noting that his

country “could have chosen war” yet it decided to “strive for peace”, he stressed: “We could have found many reasons [during] 75 years of accumulated grievances to absolve ourselves from the rule of international law, [yet] we decided to submit to it.”

The representative of Syria, spotlighting that many Western countries “are shocked with what is happening lately”, stressed: “We are shocked that none of them were shocked by all the atrocities and killings committed by the occupation authorities against the Palestinian people for the last 75 years.” Emphasizing that “the last day of occupation is the first day of peace”, he asked the High Representative: “Do you concur?” ...

Mr. Türk responded by underscoring the importance of equality, dignity and justice for all. Expressing dismay and profound shock over the attacks that were perpetrated by the Palestinian armed forces against Israeli citizens, he also recognized the legitimate grievances of the Palestinian people. “It is absolutely clear that nothing justifies acts of terror,” he added, calling for the urgent and unconditional release of those who are held hostage. “It is my duty and my responsibility to point out that military operations must be conducted with strict compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law,” he said, sounding alarm over the impact of the conflict on both Israeli and Palestinian civilians. It is essential that a solution is found to the 56-year-long conflict – a way out of this vicious cycle of bloodshed, he emphasized. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/gashc4380.doc.htm>

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

<https://undocs.org/en/A/78/36>

Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

... The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, issued an urgent plea today to all States with influence to take steps to defuse the “powder keg” situation in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. He stressed that international humanitarian law and international human rights law must be respected in all circumstances. He said that all parties must immediately cease attacks targeting civilians and attacks expected to cause disproportionate death and injury of civilians or damage to civilian objects. The High Commissioner called on Palestinian armed groups to immediately and unconditionally release all civilians who were captured and are still being held. And he added that the imposition of sieges that endanger the lives of civilians by depriving them of goods essential for their survival is prohibited under international humanitarian law.

Lynn Hastings, the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, said today that Israeli authorities have cut their water supply to Gaza, reducing an already scarce availability of potable water. And in accordance with the complete siege ordered by the Israeli Government on Gaza, access to electricity, food and fuel have also been severed, inevitably worsening the already dire humanitarian situation. ...

Hospitals in Gaza are overwhelmed with mass casualties and are running low on medical supplies. Ambulances are running out of fuel. ...

Nearly 137,500 internally displaced persons are sheltering in 83 UNRWA schools in all areas of the Gaza Strip. ...

Last night, a building housing UNRWA headquarters in Gaza City sustained significant damage as a result of air strikes nearby. ...

Question: ... if Israel had a siege completely with the Gaza Strip, which means that that’s not only to Hamas, but also to those people who live in that Strip, would that be considered an act of war crime, according to Geneva Convention?

Deputy Spokesman: ... the imposition of such sieges ... is prohibited under international humanitarian law. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/db231010.doc.htm>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Commission of Inquiry collecting evidence of war crimes committed by all sides in Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories since 7 October 2023

There is already clear evidence that war crimes may have been committed in the latest explosion of violence in Israel and Gaza, and all those who have violated international law and targeted civilians must be held accountable for their crimes, the UN Independent International [Commission of Inquiry](#) on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Israel, said today.

The Commission has been collecting and preserving evidence of war crimes committed by all sides since 7 October 2023, when Hamas launched a complex attack on Israel and Israeli forces responded with airstrikes in Gaza.

Reports that armed groups from Gaza have gunned down hundreds of unarmed civilians are abhorrent and cannot be tolerated. Taking civilian hostages and using civilians as human shields are war crimes.

The Commission is gravely concerned with Israel's latest attack on Gaza and Israel's announcement of a complete siege on Gaza involving the withholding of water, food, electricity and fuel which will undoubtedly cost civilian lives and constitutes collective punishment.

The Commission is intent on ensuring legal accountability, including individual criminal and command responsibility. ... It will continue sharing information collected with the relevant judicial authorities, especially with the International Criminal Court, where the Office of the Prosecutor has already commenced an investigation on the situation of Palestine since 2021.

The Commission is deeply distressed by the mounting violence, and spiralling death toll and underscores the urgency for the parties involved to cease all forms of violence and ensure that civilians are protected.

The Commission urges Israeli security forces and Palestinian armed groups to adhere strictly to international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The Commission also calls for the unconditional and safe release of all individuals who have been taken hostage by Palestinian armed groups. The taking of hostages is a violation of international law and constitutes an international crime. Persons deprived of liberty are protected against murder, torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and sexual violence.

In line with its previous findings, the Commission emphasises that the only path towards ending violence and achieving sustainable peace is through addressing the root causes of the conflict including through ending the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory and recognising the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/commission-inquiry-collecting-evidence-war-crimes-committed-all-sides-israel>

UN Human Rights Chief urges States to defuse “powder keg” situation in Israel and OPT, as incalculable suffering, massive death tolls take hold

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk on Tuesday issued an urgent plea to all States with influence to take steps to defuse the “powder keg” situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He stressed that international humanitarian law and international human rights law must be respected in all circumstances.

“We are faced with an explosive powder keg situation. We know how this plays out, time

and time again – the loss of Israeli and Palestinian lives and incalculable suffering inflicted on both communities,” said Türk.

“All parties must respect international humanitarian law. They must immediately cease attacks targeting civilians and attacks expected to cause disproportionate death and injury of civilians or damage to civilian objects.” ...

“It is horrific and deeply distressing to see images of those captured by Palestinian armed groups being ill-treated, as well as reports of killings and the desecration of their bodies,” he said. “Civilians must never be used as bargaining chips.”

“I call on Palestinian armed groups to immediately and unconditionally release all civilians who were captured and are still being held. The taking of hostages is prohibited by international law,” the High Commissioner said.

Türk stressed that it is vitally important that everyone deprived of their liberty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel is treated humanely. People’s dignity and lives must be respected.

Information gathered by the UN Human Rights Office indicates that Israeli air operations have also hit large residential towers in Gaza City and other residential buildings across Gaza, schools and premises of the UN relief and works agency, UNRWA, resulting in civilian casualties.

“International humanitarian law is clear: the obligation to take constant care to spare the civilian population and civilian objects remains applicable throughout the attacks,” Türk said. The principles of distinction and the prohibition of indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks are paramount. ...

“The imposition of sieges that endanger the lives of civilians by depriving them of goods essential for their survival is prohibited under international humanitarian law,” the High Commissioner said. Any restrictions on the movement of people and goods to implement a siege must be justified by military necessity or may otherwise amount to collective punishment.

The Human Rights Chief expressed deep concern at how hate speech and incitement to violence have surged since Saturday, fuelling anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in the region and globally.

“We know from bitter experience that vengeance is not the answer, and ultimately innocent civilians pay the price,” Türk said.

“The world cannot afford more polarisation. We need to find solutions guided by the full respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”

To read the full press release see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/un-human-rights-chief-urges-states-defuse-powder-keg-situation-israel-and>

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory: "The laws of war must be upheld" - UN Relief Chief: Statement by Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, about the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

The scale and speed of what’s unfolding in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel is bone-chilling.

Hundreds of Israelis have been killed and thousands have been injured. Scores are being held captive, facing appalling threats to their lives. Thousands of indiscriminate rockets have been launched into Israel.

In densely populated Gaza, hundreds of Palestinians have been killed and thousands have been injured in intense bombing. Homes, health centers and schools sheltering displaced families have been hit. The whole city is now under a siege order.

My message to all sides is unequivocal: The laws of war must be upheld. Those held captive must be treated humanely. Hostages must be released without delay. Throughout hostilities, civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected. Civilians must be allowed to leave for safer areas. And humanitarian relief and vital services and supplies to Gaza must not be blocked. The whole region is at a tipping point. The violence must stop.

<https://www.unocha.org/news/israeloccupied-palestinian-territory-laws-war-must-be-upheld-un-relief-chief>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill

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

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>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated today

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

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

**** The UK's engagement with the Middle East and North Africa** (closing date 31 October 2023)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/3205/>

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>

TOP

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